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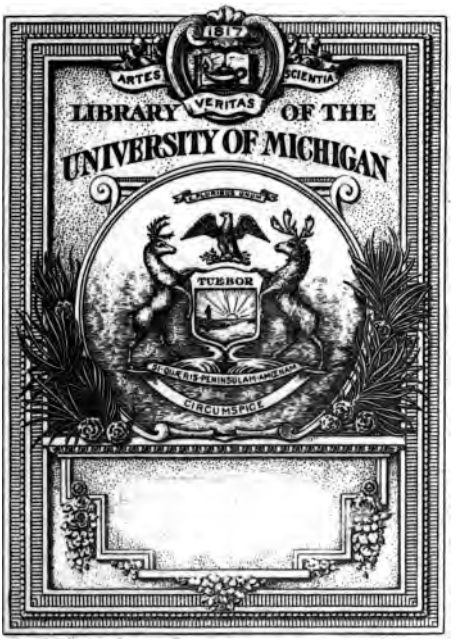

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Masterpieces of the English Drama

WEBSTER AND TOURNEUR

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

ASHLEY H. THORNDIKE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK · CINCINNATI · CHICAGO

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WEBSTER AND TOURNEUR.

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JOHN WEBSTER AND CYRIL TOURNEUR[1]

THE facts that we possess of Webster's dramatic career are meagre, as is the case with most of the Elizabethan dramatists. We do not know when he was born, what was his vocation, or what his family. What were his personal experiences, beliefs, and opinions, are matters of conjecture. In 1602 he makes his first appearance as a collaborator on plays for the theatrical manager Henslowe. The latest record that exists concerning him is a publication of 1624. During some of these intervening years he was apparently a hack writer, turning his hand to assist on this play or that as manager or actors desired, associating on terms of friendship with many of his fellow dramatists, and occasionally venturing on a poem in praise of friend or patron. Some of this work is lost; and in much of what survives his share in collaboration is with difficulty discernible, and rests largely on recent critical analysis. But he produced a few plays wholly his own, and two which neither his contemporaries nor readers

[1] There is a full bibliography of Webster in the *Belles-Lettres* edition of two of his plays, edited by Professor M. W. Sampson; and a good bibliography of critical discussions of Webster and Tourneur in Professor Schelling's *Elizabethan Drama* (1908). Professor Vaughan's essay on the two poets in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. vi (1910) is accompanied by a full bibliography, pp. 498–501. For an elaborate scholarly treatment of Webster, readers may be referred to Dr. E. E. Stoll's *John Webster* (1905); and for an account of the development of Elizabethan tragedy to the writer's *Tragedy, Types of Literature Series* (1908). The present Introduction has drawn freely from both of these books.

since then have allowed to be forgotten. Full of Elizabethan sensationalism and exaggeration, adapted to the tastes of his day, peculiarly the product of its theatre, and long since unsuited to the stage's changing requirements, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* continue yet to excite and thrill men's imaginations. In spite of all the tragedies of blood and tales of terror written during the past three centuries, they remain unsurpassed in the literature of ghastly horror. As Swinburne's fine sonnet declares, they have usurped the terrors of the grave, the "very throne of night":

> "Rage, anguish, harrowing fear, heart-crazing crime,
> Make monstrous all the murdering face of Time
> Shown in the spheral orbit of a glass
> Revolving."

Webster's work is typical of the constant conflict between the immediate demands of the theatre and high literary ambitions — a conflict which is everywhere reflected in the Elizabethan drama. That drama responded to a peculiar public, mixed of courtiers, citizens, and an almost illiterate populace; to an audience vulgar, ignorant, and brutal, craving story, sensation, and amusement. And it adapted itself to a peculiar stage, half-lighted, without scenery or drop curtain, with little decoration, without women actors, a stage that offered little assistance to the play but, on the other hand, put almost no barriers between audience and actor.

But the drama also responded to a vigorous national life, to a time of stirring activity of politics and commerce, and of emotions and ideas as well. The language itself was changing, taking readily new forms and new words, and men were as eager for adventure and

discovery in literature as in any other field. The young men who wrote for the theatre suited themselves readily to its conditions and demands, but they were also mindful of the literary greatness which the drama had attained in antiquity and of the literary achievement to which it had suddenly summoned men in their midst. They brought buffoonery, rant, and sensational story to the stage, but they also brought poetical ambition and an imaginative interest in the springs of human action and passion. Every writer, Shakespeare included, was inevitably conditioned by the habits of his audience, his actors, and his stage. Every writer, even the humblest, had some vision of interpreting life into beautiful and abiding verse. A part of Webster's work was done merely for immediate consumption, including historical plays of the crudest sort and comedies that met a passing taste for realism and indecency. But in tragedy he found a form which Marlowe, Shakespeare, and others had employed to satisfy the public's love for horrors, rant, and bloodshed, and which they had also endowed with the dignity and grandeur of poetry. Here was his opportunity for fame, for poetry, and for giving voice to something of his own soul.

All of his dramatic work, even when undeserving of any place as literature, has a considerable historical interest, because it illustrates so variously the different trends and movements in the rapid growth and expansion of the drama. That Webster was distinctly and consciously imitative, that he was at every point dependent upon the work of his predecessors, has been shown by the acute and exhaustive study of Dr. E. E. Stoll.[1] And Webster himself acknowledged his in-

[1] *John Webster*, E. E. Stoll, 1905.

debtedness with pride. He came somewhat late in the drama's brief but rapid development. He began to write plays ten years after the deaths of Greene and Marlowe, and just at the moment of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. During the ensuing decade, Chapman and Jonson, as well as Shakespeare, were at their greatest; and before the decade was over the collaboration of the youthful and brilliant Beaumont and Fletcher was at its height. It was in emulation as well as rivalry of these poets that Webster composed his masterpieces. He began writing at a time when the drama had already won a commanding sway over the imagination as well as the recreation of London, and was achieving eminence as a field for literary endeavour; and he lived to see its chief glories and the beginning of its decline. He wrote as a student and disciple of his great contemporaries, and his preface to *The White Devil* gives one of the earliest recognitions of the Elizabethan drama as literature, the first avowal that in the crude playhouses there was arising a great dramatic tradition. The document is therefore of high importance in the history of the drama:

"Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance: for mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men's worthy labours; especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman; the laboured and understanding works of Master Jonson; the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher; and lastly (without wrong last to be named), the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Dekker, and Master Heywood; wishing what I write may be read by their light; protesting that, in the strength of mine own judgement, I know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my own

work, yet to most of theirs I dare (without flattery) fix that of Martial:

"'non norunt haec monumenta mori.'"

Even Webster's great plays, as we shall see, represent, not only this general indebtedness, but also specific and close relationships to the contemporary writers of tragedy. His lesser plays are almost wholly imitative. They give no clue to the real poet, and may be noticed very briefly. In 1602 Webster is mentioned in Henslowe's Diary as collaborating on four plays: *Cæsar's Fall*, *Two Shapes* (sometimes read *Two Harpes*), *Lady Jane*, and *Christmas Comes but Once a Year*. None of these survives except *Lady Jane*, which doubtless appears in an altered form in *The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt* by Dekker and Webster, printed in 1607. Besides Dekker and Webster, Munday, Drayton, Middleton, Chettle, Heywood, and Wentworth Smith assisted in one or more of these plays, at least four being concerned in each play.

In 1604 Marston's *Malcontent* was published with some additions by Webster, probably little more than a new Induction for the performance by the King's men.

In 1607 were printed *Westward Hoe* and *Northward Hoe*, both written by Webster and Dekker, and acted two or three years earlier. These are comedies of London manners, realistic and coarse, in the main the work of Dekker, and following a current fashion in which Middleton was the leader. Webster's share in either is small.[1] His four own plays were written at later, but uncertain dates. *The White Devil* (printed 1612) was probably written and acted about 1610; *The*

[1] Cf. *The Collaboration of Webster and Dekker*, F. E. Pierce (*Yale Studies in English*, 1909).

Duchess of Malfi (pr. 1623) not long afterward. *The Devil's Law Case* (pr. 1623) followed soon after these two tragedies, which are mentioned in its dedication. *Appius and Virginia* (pr. 1654) bears evidence in its style and structure of a later date than these other plays. In 1624 the official register of the Master of Revels, Sir Henry Herbert, notes the licensing of "a new tragedy called *A Late Murder of the Son upon the Mother*," written by Ford and Webster. The play, presumably based on some contemporary crime, is non-extant.

Three other plays have been assigned in part to Webster. Kirkman, a very doubtful authority, published in 1661 two plays, *The Thracian Wonder* and *A Cure for a Cuckold*, which he assigned to Webster and Rowley. The former play shows no sign of Webster, and the traces of his manner in the second are by no means indubitable. *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall*, assigned to Dekker and Webster by Edwin Phillips, has never been accepted as his by students of the drama. Webster's non-dramatic poetry is slight and unimportant. It includes some commendatory verses to Munday and Heywood, an elaborate elegy on Prince Henry (1612) and *Monuments of Honour* (1624), "a triumph for the installation of the Lord Mayor." How long Webster lived after 1624 we do not know.

A Cure for a Cuckold and *The Devil's Law Case* are comedies of a different sort from the early ones in which Webster was associated with Dekker. They show, as Mr. Stoll has demonstrated, the influence of new fashions and of Fletcher's dominance in the drama. They rely on sensational situations and stock types of character, and bring their tragic stories to happy conclusions after a progress from surprise to surprise. They

have little distinction or merit. If we had a complete record of Webster's life, it is not improbable that we should find that he had a hand in many plays besides those recorded. Even so, it may be doubted if any of this unknown work would approach in value the three plays contained in this volume. From our brief review of the known facts of his dramatic career, it is clear that the critic's task is to trace the relationship of these plays to the general course of Elizabethan tragedy, and thus to arrive at an appreciation of their particular and abiding contribution to dramatic literature.

Tragedy, in the Elizabethan period, was a division of the drama well recognized, but never precisely defined. But its invariable accompaniment was violent death. There are few Elizabethan tragedies that are not included by the generic term, "tragedy of blood." Murder after murder, varied by an occasional suicide, and culminating in a general slaughter in the fifth act — this is the inevitable program. Toward these deaths, through plots and counterplots, many consuming emotions lead the way, love, ambition, jealousy, tyranny, and revenge. Of these none played a more active part than revenge. It is rarely altogether absent from the motives of the characters, and in a large group of plays it is the chief dramatic force. The plays of Seneca, so influential on all European tragedy during the later Renaissance, had been mainly concerned with themes of revenge or retribution; and their model was readily adapted to the English theatrical taste for bloodshed, horror, and physical suffering. This English type of revenge play was set by the enormous success of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, written at the time when Marlowe was revolutionizing the public drama. This play tells

the story of a father seeking blood vengeance for a son foully murdered. There are horrors and rant, insanity and suicide, a love idyl and philosophizing, a villain with an accomplice and a ghost who oversees the action. The father is pursued by doubts and in his irresolution is driven to madness, until he finally resorts to dissimulation and entraps the murderers into giving a play in which both they and he perish. Here, in spite of the cumbersome structure, the dramatic struggle between the avenger and the murderers offers a capital plot. It is, indeed, one of the perennial plots of fiction, and you may find it to-day in the latest melodrama or novel. There is also, in the hero's struggle against a time that seems out of joint, and in his lonely battle to punish the wicked, a theme that touches on the mysteries of destiny and circumstance. On a parallel story, the revenge of a son for a father, Kyd wrote another play, the old *Hamlet*, a play unfortunately lost, which exerted a considerable influence on the drama. Of that influence the most important result was that twelve years later, at a time when Ben Jonson was writing additions for *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare used this other play of Kyd's as a basis for his *Hamlet*.

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* brings us almost to Webster, but in the years between its production and that of *The Spanish Tragedy*, the "revenge play" had become one of the most popular forms of tragedy. Marlowe's plays had not dealt largely with revenge, except his *Jew of Malta*, which either owes much to Kyd, or else Kyd something to it; but his great protagonists, his surging passion, and his beautiful verse had disclosed new vistas of what tragedy might undertake. More specifically, he gave to the revenge play the

atrocious, unscrupulous, Machiavellian villain, a type represented by Lorenzo of *The Spanish Tragedy*, but much more fully developed in Barabas of *The Jew of Malta*. And he also gave examples of a dramatic treatment of death, at once theatrically effective and profoundly tragic. In the main, however, the revenge tragedy had followed Kyd, and the stage had been filled with avengers and ghosts. These were mostly imitative, but during a few years at the close of the century and the beginning of the next there were several plays, relating the story of a revenge of a son for a father, which offered various departures from Kyd. Besides Shakespeare's *Hamlet* there were Chettle's *Hoffman* and Tourneur's *Atheist's Tragedy*, and, earlier than any of these, Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*.

Marston is far from being an engaging writer. His uncouth language, his abominable filth, and his absurd pretentiousness are enough to hide from all but the curious reader the powerfully imaginative conceptions to which he occasionally gives expression. But his part in the development of tragedy, and especially his part in preparing the way for Tourneur and Webster, was a considerable one. He began his literary career as a writer of satires, distinguished by their fustian vocabulary and their realistic denunciations of hypocrisy and vice, and he presently transferred these themes and methods to the drama. *Antonio's Revenge* followed the general scheme of Kyd's plays with some additions of melodramatic horrors and of pessimistic philosophizing. Marston's energies were then turned to the direction in which Chapman, Jonson, Middleton, and others were leading, that of satirical and realistic comedies. One of these, *The Malcontent*, a sort of combination of the

revenge tragedy and satirical comedy, is a powerful play. The malcontent, disgusted at society and denouncing everything, nevertheless in his assumed disguise seeks to set things right. This "humouristic" conception owes something to Jonson, but the malcontents who are frequent in later drama usually remind us of Marston's hero. Both in *The Malcontent* and in his tragedies Marston aimed his satire and realism chiefly at the depiction of lust and villainy, already two important ingredients of the revenge tragedy. Henceforth they wax in importance until they overshadow the primary motive of blood vengeance.

There thus arose a new development in the revenge play, and one quite different from that which Shakespeare made in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare made the most of the motive of hesitation on the part of the avenger, and, while retaining the intrigue and bloodshed of the old story, made the internal conflict of his protagonist of primary interest. Other writers neglected the hesitation motive and developed the model of Kyd largely by emphasizing the most horrible aspects of lust and villainy.

If Marston or Tourneur had revised *Hamlet*, the passion of Claudius for the Queen would have been more prominent, Ophelia would have been involved in some lustful entanglement, and Laertes would have been as depraved and cynical as Iago. Chettle, indeed, in dealing with the revenge of a son for a father, made the avenger an utterly bloodthirsty villain who in the end is destroyed because of his passion for the mother of his chief victim; and Tourneur, dealing with the same plot in *The Atheist's Tragedy*, made the murderer lustful after the betrothed of the hero. Such sensational entanglements of lust and villainy had no

been unknown in the earlier drama; the new development was the result of an effort for realistic and searching exploitation. In this the revenge play was in keeping with the changing taste of the theatres, manifested by the change of comedy from romantic to realistic themes, by the interest in a realistic and satirical depiction of London manners, and by a special fondness for the presentation of sexual vice. *Measure for Measure* witnesses some influence of this change on Shakespeare. Plays like *Westward Hoe* and *Northward Hoe*, in which Webster had a share, and some of Middleton's comedies show how easily this new realism descended to meeting a prurient demand. Other plays, like Marston's *Malcontent* and Jonson's *Volpone* are more worthy representatives of a serious effort to expose and chastise sin. If comedy followed sin and vice, tragedy probed into their blackest recesses. Four plays written within a few years of each other may be taken as defining this new development of the revenge play:— Tourneur's *Revenger's Tragedy*, the anonymous *Second Maiden's Tragedy*, and Webster's *White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. They may be said to create a type of tragedy which on the whole remains the prevailing form for over thirty years, until the closing of the theatres. I have elsewhere described in sufficient detail the characteristics of this group of plays, and I may perhaps be excused for quoting the passage here:

"Revenge is no longer the main motive, but is a subsidiary element in complicated stories of revolting lust and depravity. Tragedy has become the representation of vice and sin, with a proneness for their foulest entanglements. In one play a brother plays the part of pander to his sister; in another a father to his daughter; and in a

third a mother to her daughter. Nor is revenge, even in its subordinate position, the simple blood-for-blood requital that it is in Kyd. It may be for various causes beside murder; it is born of malice rather than duty; it may share in the moral turpitude of the rest of the action. The ghost no longer directs the course of revenge, and may disappear entirely. In *The Revenger's Tragedy* the skull of the betrothed, as the skeleton in *Hoffman*, takes the place of the apparition; and in other plays the duties of the ghost are minimized or farmed out among various supernatural agents, two female ghosts appearing. Hesitation on the part of the avenger does not appear. Indeed, his entire character has changed. He may be a villain, as in *Hoffman*, or the villain's accomplice, or one of Marston's "malcontents," or a combination of these parts. The other leading elements in the Kydian type are preserved. Insanity of various forms, real and pretended, is prominent. Intrigue of a complicated kind abounds, but it is often dependent, after the fashion of current comedy, largely on improbable disguises. Deaths are as frequent as ever and more horrible. Much of the old stage effect reappears, as in the masques, funerals, ghosts, and exhibition of dead bodies, but there is a great increase in the number and ingenuity of melodramatic sensations. Each play is a chamber of horrors. In one a wife dies from kissing the poisoned portrait of her husband; in another, the lustful king sucks poison from the jaw of a skull; and in a third, from the painted lips of a corpse. Comets blaze, there are many portents, the time is ever midnight, the scene the graveyard, the air smells of corruption, skulls and corpses are the dramatis personæ. Every means seem to be employed to make theatrically effective the horrors of death and decay. And once, at least, these means are used with tremendous power in the riot of madness, torture, and corruption that preludes the death of the Duchess of Malfi.

"All or nearly all of the active characters are black with sin. The extraordinary exploitation of villainy in Eliza-

bethan tragedy here reaches its culmination. The arch villain as ruthlessly devoted to crime as Hoffman, the accomplice assiduous in revolting baseness, the villain touched by remorse, the malcontent reviling human life — all these appear, sometimes all combined in one person, and play their parts along with unshrinking prostitutes and lustful monarchs. The study of villainy, however, has gained intensity and plausibility over the earlier plays. If none of the villains take to themselves much individuality, most of them have moments of dramatic impressiveness, and they are intended to be realistic. They are drawn with an accumulation of detail, a fondness for probing into depravity, with a sense of the dramatic value of devilry, and with a bitterness and cynicism that often seem sincere and searching. It is this cynicism which gives character to the reflective elements of these plays. The Kydian soliloquy on fate has given way to the prevailing satirical and bitter tone that finds its favourite themes in the sensuality of women and the hypocrisy and greed of courts, and its favourite means of expression in the connotation of the obscene and bestial." [1]

These are, I believe, the more striking characteristics of the type which Tourneur and Webster helped to create. They recur in the tragedies of Middleton, Ford, Massinger, and Shirley; and after the Restoration in the plays of Nathaniel Lee and others; and they reappear in the tragedies of romanticists at the beginning of the nineteenth century. While several plays have been grouped together because of their salient resemblances, their differences are not to be neglected. It is from an examination of these differences that we may best arrive at a distinction between Tourneur and Webster.

Only two plays by Cyril Tourneur survive, — *The Atheist's Tragedy* (pr. 1611) and *The Revenger's*

[1] *Tragedy.* A. H. Thorndike, 1908, pp. 199–201.

Tragedy (pr. 1607); both were probably acted a few years before either of Webster's tragedies. *The Atheist's Tragedy*, acted about 1603, tells the story of a son's revenge for a father, which it unites to an exceedingly gross under-plot. The play as a whole is both absurd and contemptible, but it presents an original and interesting treatment of the revenge motive. The ghost is a Christian one who commands his son to leave revenge to heaven. The son after a struggle acquiesces, and is saved by the miraculous suicide of the atheist villain. The atheist's soliloquies make a connected commentary on the ways of Providence. Though the play is largely devoted to lust and villainy, this new treatment of ghost and avenger suggests many points of comparison with *Hamlet*.

The Revenger's Tragedy, acted 1605–1606, follows rather the models of *The Malcontent* and *Hoffman*. Dr. Ward's comment on the plot must be endorsed. It is, he declares, "in its sewer-like windings one of the blackest and most polluting devised by the perverted imaginations of an age prone to feed on the worst scandals of the Italian decadence." [1] More prurient, and more horrible than his predecessors, Tourneur is also more imaginative. His picture of a court rotten to the core, of a festering sore awaiting the knife, must be pronounced the product of an original and dramatic imagination. In his dramatic structure he uses the principles of contrast and climax to secure startling effects. He delights in unspeakable juxtapositions, and he piles horror on horror without a trace of relief. His picture, powerfully conceived and daringly constructed, gains its colouring from his vivid life-like dialogue and his brilliant, hectic imagery.

[1] *History of English Dramatic Literature*, A. W. Ward, III. 69.

When it comes to characterization, however, Tourneur's imagination is at a loss. He is essentially melodramatic; he can build up thrilling situations, and can make them vivid through phrase and figure; but he cannot relate them to his characters. In *The Atheist's Tragedy* he fails utterly to translate his philosophical conception into terms of human motive. In *The Revenger's Tragedy* you are never sure of the actors. Each is one thing at one moment, and another at the next. Vendice, the malcontent, is a moralizing avenger, and also a degenerate, perverted to a delight in "pruriency steeped in horrors." The mother and the daughter, though they share in effective dialogues, are utterly without individuality. Everything is theatrical and melodramatic; and everything is carried to excess. The malcontent-avenger, the lustful monarch, the bastard villain, and the mother-bawd are monstrous beyond what their rôles suggest. To borrow his own words — his people, drunk with crime, "reel to hell"; his tragedy is one "to make an old man's eyes bloodshot."

Without individuality or consistency of characterization, the play is without moral significance. There is, to be sure, moralizing enough, and his plays carry direct lessons, but they supply no premises for moral conclusions. They do not represent life, and they have nothing of value to say about life. Their people are not men and women; they are hobgoblins, satyrs, and trolls. His plays are nightmares. A chamber of horrors is what he succeeds in presenting, and that is all. Both as playwright and poet, he saw the world, not populated with human beings, but crowded with ghastly spectres. For these he could find startling scene or brilliant image, but never the similitude of life.

It is in characterization that the differences between

Webster and Tourneur are most obvious. For Webster studied men and women, and subdued the conventionalities and theatricalities of the tragedy of horror to the presentation of individuality. The differences between the two men, however, are many. Webster was the more studious, the better read, and the more sincerely devoted to his art. Where Tourneur hurried to give his prodigious ideas imagery and spectacle, Webster, we may believe, worked slowly and laboriously, making the most of his knowledge of his great contemporaries, and fitting the current practices of the stage to the ways and utterances of characters over whom he had long brooded.

In writing tragedies he was beholden, not only to the writers whose material most closely resembled his own, to Kyd, Marston, and Tourneur, but, perhaps more consciously, to the greater writers, Jonson, Chapman, and Shakespeare. Chapman, whom he seems to single out above all others in his acknowledgment of indebtedness already quoted, had written his four most famous tragedies by the time of *The White Devil*, two dealing with Bussy D'Ambois and two with Biron. These presented studies of recent French history, and were clothed in a blank verse almost Shakespearean in its commingling of splendid and complicated tropes with pregnant aphorisms. They seem to have inspired Webster to attempt a studied and heightened style. There are few passages in his tragedies that have not been carefully considered, few aphorisms that have not been painstakingly moulded. The figures in each play seem deliberately chosen in view of the general theme and tone. There is a manifest care to create details in harmony with the main picture. Moreover, Webster, like Chapman and Jonson, at-

tempts the elaborate and comprehensive delineation of character. Tragedy, in his view as well as theirs, involved the full portraiture of extraordinary figures. In these respects, too, he must have learned something from Shakespeare; for, though specific indebtedness is not clear, the processes of his art resemble Shakespeare's. Like the latter, he was absorbed in the study of the effects of crime upon character, and he acquired the power of realizing these momentarily with amazing dramatic truth. In fine, Webster, in spite of his attachment to a type of tragedy theatrically popular and absurdly unreal, was emulous, not of the masters of melodrama, but of those who were making tragedy the revelation of the philosophy and poetry of human suffering and ruin.

He nevertheless adhered closely to the externals of the tragedy of revenge. The description of the type just given applies to his plays as closely as to Tourneur's. There is hardly a scene or a situation in his two great plays that cannot be substantially duplicated elsewhere. When he departs from the paraphernalia of Marston and Tourneur, it is to return to the older technic of Kyd and Chapman. Keeping this old material, he lacked the dramatic ingenuity to work it over into fresh surprises. He had not the peculiar talent that could light-heartedly bind together murders, ghosts, and skeletons into a rip-roarer. And his plays lack the essential elements of structure. He could not reduce his matter to a coherent dramatic fable. He was not a great playwright. As far as technic is concerned, he was hardly more than a copyist and compiler, borrowing the effects and devices of his predecessors, and saved from their worst excesses by the gravity and veracity of his imagination.

His great plays make their appeal to readers to-day and must have won their success on the Elizabethan stage largely through the interest excited in their leading characters. Webster's characterization is not analytic, scientific, explanatory. We do not entirely comprehend the motives of his people; neither did he. He was making over Italian stories for the stage, following a certain fashion in the drama, creating parts along certain well-tried lines for certain actors. But, if he was not a good constructor of plays, he had an extraordinary power of visualizing and integrating the parts that he created. He made white devils, tortured women, moralizing panders, and so did others; but Webster knew how his wretches looked, and he could give them authentic speech. Their reality and impressiveness are undoubtedly suited to the stage. They were fitted to certain actors, and conceived as parts of crises of passion, of climaxes of sensation. But their interest to Webster and even to his own time was something other than that of stage figures. In an age familiar with lust and murder in their more violent forms, stories of Italian crime and intrigue had the fascination of reality as well as of horror. These stories gave to the stage its spectacles and thrills, and they directed the greater dramatists to a curious and searching inquiry into human nature. Like Shakespeare, Webster made his tragedies of horror his means of approach to an interrogation and criticism of life. He is ever probing his dramatis personæ with the query, What is the meaning of life?

The most famous of Webster's characters are his two women. White devils have been common in the drama, and the union of beauty and depravity perhaps offers too patent an opportunity for stage effects.

Webster's white devil (who bears no resemblance to the real Vittoria) is undoubtedly drawn for the theatre. She is a part of the situations; she never speechifies unless the situation requires it; and she responds magnificently to the great crises. At the same time she is the product of a painstaking realism that makes every detail suggestive of actual life. And the portrait, so precisely drawn, is made memorable by the splendid poetry of her discourse. Take, for example, the beginning of the play, where her speeches are studiedly commonplace until she describes her dream, revealing her nature and the impending crimes, and symbolic of the whole play in its gloomy imagery as well as in its matter.

> "When to my rescue there arose, methought,
> A whirlwind, which let fall a massy arm
> From that strong plant;
> And both were struck dead by that sacred yew,
> In that base shallow grave that was their due."

Or take her in the famous trial scene when she meets all accusations with that startling effrontery which Charles Lamb found "innocence-resembling." We are reminded, not of innocence, but of many a woman in actual life facing trial with a shamelessness that is almost heroic. The consistency of the character is so maintained throughout that there is no speech which violates it; hardly an important speech which does not reveal it. You can gather from her speeches, as from those of Shakespeare's Cleopatra, a series of phrases and metaphors that reproduce her without aid of story and scene. Recall the scene of Brachiano's death. During his ravings, how few and simple are her words, and yet how revealing! And in the last

complicated and prolonged scene where all are killed, how splendid as poetry and how consistent with her character are her dying defiances!

> "My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
> Is driven, I know not whither."

The Duchess of Malfi is a figure far less suited to the drama. She does not play an active part. She does not dominate and direct the action; she is only a sufferer. But Webster's triumph is again that of compelling sensational clap-trap and abnormal cruelty to assist in the revelation of real human beings. The motives and emotions of the duchess are not primarily sensational or unusual; she is only a likable and normal woman who marries a worthy man who is her social inferior. But in the ordeal of gibbering madmen and dismembered corpses she summons that fortitude with which so many of her sisters have known how to meet suffering and torment. Again we have that union of dramatic fitness, of detailed truth to life, and of superb phrase which render Webster's characterization comparable with Shakespeare's. Here is the most terrible of all the chambers of horror that the Elizabethan imagination could create, and in the midst of it, a real, a simple, and an undaunted woman:

> "I am Duchess of Malfi still."

Hardly less extraordinary than Webster's women are his villains, Flamineo and Bosola. If they are more stagy and less consistently individualized, it is not because Webster did not try to make them real. Flamineo is not made to live; his motives are hopelessly contradictory; but he dies with an exhibition of tremendous effrontery scarcely equalled by any of the

villains of literature. Of the much discussed Bosola, I agree with Mr. Stoll that, like Flamineo, he represents "two incongruous, incompatible rôles — malcontent and tool-villain." These had become stock types on the stage — the cynical moralist who denounces and exposes unrighteousness, and the conscienceless accomplice who sells himself to his wicked master, but is tricked and receives death as his only reward. The combination of the two parts made an effective monster for the Elizabethan stage, but it manifestly violates all psychology. Webster as usual accepted the theatrical part, but he recognized, as Mr. Stoll notes, its inconsistency, and strove, though not with entire success, to integrate the conflicting traits. Bosola represents the conflict of two diverse natures. He goes on multiplying wickedness and giving his devil full play, until he finally heeds his good angel and undertakes one last deed of virtue. If this conception is not adequately motived, it has enough human resemblance to exercise an uncanny fascination; and it has been perpetuated in modern fiction.

Bosola, like the other persons of Webster's tragedies, is conceived with a full recognition of moral values, though these cannot always be harmonized with the functions of the stage part. Webster is eager enough to mix the vile and the noble, but he never, like Tourneur, fails to distinguish between them. He is, in fact, so anxious to keep in the light of the moral law that he often forces his moralizing upon us; but his great virtue, in comparison with the other writers of his school, is that he creates his dramas, not merely as series of stage sensations, nor yet as congeries of horrible phantoms, but as stories of the relations of men to men. The ties and obligations of human society are

always in his view. Even when he is dealing with loathsome deeds and despicable wretches, he can still impel us to a strengthened respect for duty, virtue, and sympathy.

> "Frail, on frail rafts, across wide-wallowing waves,
> Shapes here and there of child and mother pass."

He summons his villains, panders, assassins, and sensualists to a moral tribunal. His study of character proceeds by the method of the Inquisition. He arrives at truth through torture, but he secures answers that come from the soul. The replies to his insistent query — What is the meaning of life? — do not comprehend life, they may not comprehend Webster's own beliefs, but they do provide an impressive view of one domain in the tragedy of life. They reveal its physical horrors, its moral degradations, the blackness of its vice and cruelty, the helplessness of its virtue and righteousness. Brood as Webster did over stories of revolting crime, and you must find much in life and death that is both horrible and hopeless. This is the province which his tragedies make their own. But Webster, even when he presents the last view of a lost soul, sees a glimmer of the light of righteousness across the blackness. Thus, Bosola dies:

> "We are only like dead walls, or vaulted graves,
> That ruined, yield no echo. Fare you well.
> It may be pain, but no harm to me to die
> In so good a quarrel. O this gloomy world!
> In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,
> Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!
> Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust
> To suffer death or shame for what is just:
> Mine is another voyage."

Appius and Virginia stands somewhat apart from the other two tragedies. Apparently written much later, it deserts the horrific school for other models, and it reflects a tamer imagination and a more timid study of life. Webster was, perhaps, restrained from daring innovation by his historical material and by the great examples of Shakespeare's Roman plays. At any rate, though the play retains many of the characteristics of his earlier tragedies, particularly in its style and its treatment of Appius, it does not distinguish itself greatly from contemporary plays. By its date, tragedy was conforming to established traditions and methods, and all its representatives take on a certain sameness. *Appius and Virginia* does not escape this lack of individual distinction. One could almost believe that it was the work of Massinger, or of another. Yet it must be ranked among the best of Roman historical plays outside of Shakespeare; and it well deserves the praise that Dyce awards it in one of those critical dicta on which he so rarely ventured but which are so invariably well-considered and judicious. "This drama is so remarkable for its simplicity, its deep pathos, its unobtrusive beauties, its singleness of plot, and the easy unimpeded march of its story, that perhaps there are readers who will prefer it to any other of our author's productions." [1]

But no admirer of Webster will so prefer it. You cannot put *Appius and Virginia* above his other tragedies, unless you deny the greatness of his genius, and indeed the greatness of the Elizabethan drama. *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* have faults that *Appius and Virginia* lacks, an overplus of horrors and a confused structure. But these are the common de-

[1] *The Works of John Webster*, A. Dyce. Introduction.

fects of the Elizabethan drama, which are abundantly recompensed by its wealth of life and its poetry; and in these respects *Appius and Virginia* is the inferior of the other plays. Their triumphs it shares only in part — their dramatic realization of vice and death and suffering as parts of life, their creation of an Inferno and discovery of human beings therein, and the unforgettable poetry with which their tortured beings speak.

Ashley H. Thorndike

THE WHITE DEVIL

OR

VITTORIA COROMBONA

THE WHITE DEVIL

THE plot of the *The White Devil* is based upon actual historical events, though the personages here represented have, for dramatic reasons, been considerably exaggerated. The case of Vittoria Accoramboni, who was murdered in 1585, was a notorious one and excited much feeling and discussion. There were many versions of the story, and Webster seems not to have had access to information at first hand. A thorough study of the sources of the play may be found in the *Modern Language Quarterly*, cxi. 12 (1900). There are four early editions of the text: the edition of 1612, here reproduced with certain emendations of recognized authority, and the editions of 1631, 1665, and 1672.

TO THE READER

In publishing this tragedy, I do but challenge to myself that liberty which other men have ta'en before me: not that I affect praise by it, for *nos hæc novimus esse nihil;* only, since it was acted in so dull a time of winter, presented in so open and black a theatre, that it wanted (that which is the only grace and setting-out of a tragedy) a full and understanding auditory; and that, since that time, I have noted most of the people that come to that play-house resemble those ignorant asses who, visiting stationers' shops, their use is not to inquire for good books, but new books; I present it to the general view with this confidence:

> Nec rhoncos metues maligniorum,
> Nec scombris tunicas dabis molestas.[n]

If it be objected this is no true dramatic poem, I shall easily confess it; *non potes in nugas dicere plura meas, ipse ego quam dixi.* Willingly, and not ignorantly, in this kind have I faulted: for, should a man present to such an auditory the most sententious tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critical laws, as height of style, and gravity of person, enrich it with the sententious Chorus, and, as it were, liven death in the passionate and weighty Nuntius; yet, after all this divine rapture, *O dura messorum ilia*, the breath that comes from the uncapable multitude is able to poison it; and, ere it be acted, let the author resolve to fix to every scene this of Horace:

> Hæc porcis hodie comedenda relinques.[n]

To those who report I was a long time in finishing this tragedy, I confess, I do not write with a goose quill winged with two feathers; and if they will needs make it my fault, I must answer them with that of Euripides to Alcestides, a tragic writer. Alcestides objecting that Euripides had only, in three days, composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred, "Thou tellest truth," quoth he, "but here's the difference, — thine shall only be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages."

Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance: for mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men's worthy labours; especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman; the laboured and understanding works of Master Jonson; the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher; and lastly (without wrong last to be named), the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Dekker, and Master Heywood; wishing what I write may be read by their light; protesting that, in the strength of mine own judgement, I know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my own work, yet to most of theirs I dare (without flattery) fix that of Martial:

Non norunt hæc monumenta mori.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MONTICELSO, a Cardinal; afterwards Pope PAUL the Fourth.

FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, Duke of Florence; in the Fifth Act disguised for a Moor, under the name of MULINASSAR.

BRACHIANO, otherwise PAULO GIORDANO URSINI, Duke of Brachiano, Husband to ISABELLA, and in love with VITTORIA.

GIOVANNI, his Son by ISABELLA.

LODOVICO, an Italian Count, but decayed.

ANTONELLI, GASPARO, } his Friends, and Dependants of the Duke of Florence.

CAMILLO, Husband to VITTORIA.

HORTENSIO, one of BRACHIANO'S Officers.

MARCELLO, an Attendant of the Duke of Florence, and Brother to VITTORIA.

FLAMINEO, his Brother; Secretary to BRACHIANO.

JAQUES, a Moor, Servant to GIOVANNI.

Ambassadors, Courtiers, Lawyers, Officers, Physicians, Conjurer, Armourer, Attendants.

ISABELLA, Sister to FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, and Wife to BRACHIANO.

VITTORIA COROMBONA, a Venetian Lady; first married to CAMILLO, afterwards to BRACHIANO.

CORNELIA, Mother to VITTORIA, FLAMINEO, and MARCELLO.

ZANCHE, a Moor, Servant to VITTORIA.

SCENE — ITALY

THE WHITE DEVIL

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I[n]

Enter Count LODOVICO, ANTONELLI, *and* GASPARO

Lod. Banished!
Ant. It grieved me much to hear the sentence.
Lod. Ha, ha, O Democritus, thy gods
That govern the whole world! courtly reward
And punishment. Fortune's a right whore:
If she give aught, she deals it in small parcels,
That she may take away all at one swoop.
This 'tis to have great enemies! God 'quite them.
Your wolf no longer seems to be a wolf
Than when she's hungry.
Gas. You term those enemies,
Are men of princely rank.
Lod. O I pray for them:
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pashed in pieces by it.
Ant. Come, my lord,
You are justly doomed; look but a little back
Into your former life: you have in three years
Ruined the noblest earldom.
Gas. Your followers
Have swallowed you, like mummia,[n] and being sick
With such unnatural and horrid physic,
Vomit you up i' th' kennel.

[n] A superior n in the text indicates a note at the end of the volume.

Ant. All the damnable degrees
Of drinking have you staggered through. One citizen
Is lord of two fair manors, called you master,
Only for caviare.[n]
Gas. Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigal feasts,
(Wherein the phœnix scarce could scape your throats)[n]
Laugh at your misery, as fore-deeming you
An idle meteor, which drawn forth the earth,[n]
Would be soon lost i' the air.
Ant. Jest upon you,
And say you were begotten in an earthquake;
You have ruined such fair lordships.
Lod. Very good.
This well goes with two buckets: I must tend
The pouring out of either.
Gas. Worse than these.
You have acted certain murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror.
Lod. 'Las, they were flea-bitings:
Why took they not my head then?
Gas. O my lord!
The law doth sometimes mediate, thinks it good
Not ever to steep violent sins in blood:
This gentle penance may both end your crimes,
And in the example better these bad times.
Lod. So, but I wonder then some great men scape
This banishment: there's Paulo Giordano Ursini,
The duke of Brachiano, now lives in Rome,
And by close panderism seeks to prostitute
The honour of Vittoria Corombona:
Vittoria, she that might have got my pardon
For one kiss to the duke.
Ant. Have a full man within you:
We see that trees bear no such pleasant fruit
There where they grew first, as where they are new set.
Perfumes, the more they are chafed, the more they render

Their pleasing scents: and so affliction
Expresseth virtue fully, whether true,
Or else adulterate.
Lod. Leave your painted comforts;
I'll make Italian cut-works[n] in their guts
If ever I return.
Gas. O sir!
Lod. I am patient.
I have seen some ready to be executed,
Give pleasant looks, and money, and grow familiar
With the knave hangman; so do I; I thank them,
And would account them nobly merciful,
Would they dispatch me quickly.
Ant. Fare you well;
We shall find time, I doubt not, to repeal
Your banishment.
Lod. I am ever bound to you.
[*A flourish of trumpets announcing the Duke.*
This is the world's alms; pray make use of it.
Great men sell sheep, thus to be cut in pieces,
When first they have shorn them bare, and sold their fleeces. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter BRACHIANO, CAMILLO, FLAMINEO, VITTORIA

Brach. Your best of rest.
Vit. Unto my lord the duke,
The best of welcome. More lights: attend the duke.
[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* VITTORIA.
Brach. Flamineo.
Flam. My lord.
Brach. Quite lost, Flamineo.
Flam. Pursue your noble wishes, I am prompt
As lightning to your service. O my lord!
The fair Vittoria, my happy sister,

Shall give you present audience. Gentlemen, [*Whisper.*
Let the caroch go on, and 'tis his pleasure
You put out all your torches, and depart.

Brach. Are we so happy?

Flam. Can it be otherwise?
Observed you not to-night, my honoured lord,
Which way soe'er you went, she threw her eyes?
I have dealt already with her chambermaid,
Zanche the Moor; and she is wondrous proud
To be the agent for so high a spirit.

Brach. We are happy above thought, because 'bove merit.

Flam. 'Bove merit! we may now talk freely: 'bove merit! what is't you doubt? her coyness! that's but the superficies of lust most women have; yet why should ladies blush to hear that named, which they do not fear to handle? O they are politic; they know our desire is increased by the difficulty of enjoying; whereas satiety is a blunt, weary, and drowsy passion. If the buttery-hatch at court stood continually open, there would be nothing so passionate crowding, nor hot suit after the beverage.

Brach. O but her jealous husband —

Flam. Hang him; a gilder that hath his brains perished with quicksilver is not more cold in the liver.[n] The great barriers moulted not more feathers[n] than he hath shed hairs, by the confession of his doctor. An Irish gamester that will play himself naked,[n] and then wage all downwards, at hazard, is not more venturous. So unable to please a woman, that, like a Dutch doublet, all his back is shrunk into his breeches.
Shroud you within this closet, good my lord;
Some trick now must be thought on to divide
My brother-in-law from his fair bedfellow.

Brach. O should she fail to come!

Flam. I must not have your lordship thus unwisely amorous. I myself have loved a lady, and pursued her

with a great deal of under-age protestation, whom some three or four gallants that have enjoyed would with all their hearts have been glad to have been rid of. 'Tis just like a summer bird-cage in a garden: the birds that are without despair to get in, and the birds that are within despair and are in a consumption, for fear they shall never get out. Away, away, my lord.

[*Exit* BRACHIANO.

Enter CAMILLO

See here he comes. This fellow by his apparel
Some men would judge a politician;
But call his wit in question, you shall find it
Merely an ass in's foot-cloth.[n] How now, brother?
What, travelling to bed to your kind wife?

Cam. I assure you, brother, no; my voyage lies
More northerly, in a far colder clime.
I do not well remember, I protest,
When I last lay with her.

Flam. Strange you should lose your count.

Cam. We never lay together, but ere morning
There grew a flaw[rr] between us.

Flam. 'Thad been your part
To have made up that flaw.

Cam. True, but she loathes
I should be seen in't.

Flam. Why, sir, what's the matter?

Cam. The duke your master visits me, I thank him;
And I perceive how, like an earnest bowler,
He very passionately leans that way
He should have his bowl run.

Flam. I hope you do not think —

Cam. That nobleman bowl booty?[n] faith, his cheek
Hath a most excellent bias: it would fain
Jump with my mistress.[n]

Flam. Will you be an ass,

Despite your Aristotle? or a cuckold,
Contrary to your Ephemerides,
Which shows you under what a smiling planet
You were first swaddled?
Cam. Pew wew, sir; tell not me
Of planets nor of Ephemerides.
A man may be made cuckold in the day-time,
When the stars eyes are out.
Flam. Sir, God b'wi' you;
I do commit you to your pitiful pillow
Stuffed with horn-shavings.[n]
Cam. Brother!
Flam. God refuse me,[n]
Might I advise you now, your only course
Were to lock up your wife.
Cam. 'Twere very good.
Flam. Bar her the sight of revels.
Cam. Excellent.
Flam. Let her not go to church, but, like a hound
In leam,[n] at your heels.
Cam. 'Twere for her honour.
Flam. And so you should be certain in one fortnight,
Despite her chastity or innocence,
To be cuckolded, which yet is in suspense.
This is my counsel, and I ask no fee for't.
Cam. Come, you know not where my night-cap wrings me.
Flam. Wear it a' th' old fashion; let your large ears come through, it will be more easy. Nay, I will be bitter: bar your wife of her entertainment: women are more willingly and more gloriously chaste, when they are least restrained of their liberty. It seems you would be a fine capricious, mathematically jealous coxcomb; take the height of your own horns with a Jacob's staff, afore they are up.[n] These politic inclosures for paltry mutton, make more rebellion in the flesh, than all the provocative electuaries doctors have uttered since last jubilee.[n]

Cam. This doth not physic me.

Flam. It seems you are jealous: I'll show you the error of it by a familiar example: I have seen a pair of spectacles fashioned with such perspective art, that lay down but one twelve pence a' th' board, 'twill appear as if there were twenty; now should you wear a pair of these spectacles, and see your wife tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty hands were taking up of your wife's clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causeless fury.

Cam. The fault here, sir, is not in the eyesight.

Flam. True, but they that have the yellow jaundice think all objects they look on to be yellow. Jealousy is worse; her fits presenting to a man, like so many bubbles in a bason of water, twenty several crabbed faces, many times makes his own shadow his cuckold-maker.

Enter VITTORIA COROMBONA

See, she comes; what reason have you to be jealous of this creature? what an ignorant ass or flattering knave might he be counted, that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida, or ivory of Corinth; or compare her hair to the blackbird's bill,[n] when 'tis like the blackbird's feather? this is all. Be wise; I will make you friends, and you shall go to bed together. Marry, look you, it shall not be your seeking. Do you stand upon that, by any means: walk you aloof; I would not have you seen in't. — Sister (my lord attends you in the banquetting-house)[n] your husband is wondrous discontented.

Vit. I did nothing to displease him; I carved to him at supper-time.

Flam. You need not have carved him, in faith; (they say he is a capon already. I must now seemingly fall out with you.) Shall a gentleman so well descended as Camillo (a lousy slave, that within this twenty years

rode with the black guard in the duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping-pans !) —

Cam. Now he begins to tickle her.

Flam. An excellent scholar (one that hath a head filled with calves' brains without any sage in them, come crouching in the hams to you for a night's lodging? that hath an itch in's hams, which like the fire at the glass-house[n] hath not gone out this seven years) is he not a courtly gentleman? (when he wears white satin, one would take him by his black muzzle to be no other creature than a maggot) you are a goodly foil,[n] I confess, well set out (but covered with a false stone — yon counterfeit diamond.)

Cam. He will make her know what is in me.

Flam. Come, my lord attends you; (thou shalt go to bed to my lord).

Cam. Now he comes to't.

Flam. With a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste new wine. (I am opening your case hard.)

[*To* CAMILLO.

Cam. A virtuous brother, o' my credit!

Flam. He will give thee a ring with a philosopher's stone[n] in it.

Cam. Indeed, I am studying alchemy.

Flam. Thou shalt lie in a bed stuffed with turtle's feathers; swoon in perfumed linen, like the fellow was smothered in roses. So perfect shall be thy happiness, that as men at sea think land, and trees, and ships, go that way they go; so both heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage. Shall't meet him; 'tis fixed, with nails of diamonds to inevitable necessity.

Vit. [*Aside.*] How shall's rid him hence?

Flam. (I will put brize in's tail, set him gadding presently.) I have almost wrought her to it; I find her coming: but, might I advise you now, for this night I would not lie with her, I would cross her humour to make her more humble.

Cam. Shall I, shall I?

Flam. It will show in you a supremacy of judgement.

Cam. True, and a mind differing from the tumultuary opinion; for, *quæ negata, grata.*[n]

Flam. Right: you are the adamant shall draw her to you, though you keep distance off.

Cam. A philosophical reason.

Flam. Walk by her a' th' nobleman's fashion, and tell her you will lie with her at the end of the progress.[n]

Cam. Vittoria, I cannot be induced, or as a man would say, incited ——

Vit. To do what, sir?

Cam. To lie with you to-night. Your silkworm useth to fast every third day, and the next following spins the better. To-morrow at night, I am for you.

Vit. You'll spin a fair thread, trust to't.

Flam. But do you hear, I shall have you steal[n] to her chamber about midnight.

Cam. Do you think so? why look you, brother, because you shall not think I'll gull you, take the key, lock me into the chamber, and say you shall be sure of me.

Flam. In troth I will; I'll be your jailer once.
But have you ne'er a false door?

Cam. A pox on't, as I am a Christian! tell me to-morrow how scurvily she takes my unkind parting.

Flam. I will.

Cam. Didst thou not mark the jest of the silkworm? Good-night; in faith, I will use this trick often.

Flam. Do, do, do. [*Exit* CAMILLO.
So, now you are safe. Ha, ha, ha, thou intanglest thyself in thine own work like a silkworm.

Come, sister, darkness hides your blush. Women are like curst dogs:[n] civility keeps them tied all day-time, but they are let loose at midnight; then they do most good, or most mischief. My lord, my lord!

Enter BRACHIANO. ZANCHE *brings out a carpet, spreads it, and lays on it two fair cushions*

Brach. Give credit:[n] I could wish time would stand still,
And never end this interview, this hour;
But all delight doth itself soon'st devour.

Enter CORNELIA *listening*

Let me into your bosom, happy lady,
Pour out, instead of eloquence, my vows.
Loose me not, madam, for if you forego me,
I am lost eternally.
Vit. Sir, in the way of pity,
I wish you heart-whole.
Brach. You are a sweet physician.
Vit. Sure, sir, a loathèd cruelty in ladies
Is as to doctors many funerals:
It takes away their credit.
Brach. Excellent creature!
We call the cruel, fair; what name for you
That are so merciful?
Zan. See now they close.
Flam. Most happy union.
Cor. [*Aside.*] My fears are fall'n upon me: O my heart!
My son the pander! now I find our house
Sinking to ruin. Earthquakes leave behind,
Where they have tyrannized, iron, or lead, or stone;
But woe to ruin, violent lust leaves none.
Brach. What value is this jewel?
Vit. 'Tis the ornament of a weak fortune.
Brach. In sooth, I'll have it; nay, I will but change
My jewel for your jewel.
Flam. Excellent;
His jewel for her jewel: — well put in, duke.
Brach. Nay, let me see you wear it.

Vit. Here, sir?
Brach. Nay, lower, you shall wear my jewel lower.
Flam. That's better: she must wear his jewel lower.
Vit. To pass away the time, I'll tell your grace
A dream I had last night.
Brach. Most wishedly.
Vit. A foolish idle dream:
Methought I walk'd about the mid of night
Into a churchyard, where a goodly yew-tree
Spread her large root in ground: under that yew,
As I sate sadly leaning on a grave,
Chequered with cross sticks,[n] there came stealing in
Your duchess and my husband; one of them
A pick-ax bore, th' other a rusty spade,
And in rough terms they 'gan to challenge me
About this yew.
Brach. That tree?
Vit. This harmless yew;
They told me my intent was to root up
That well-grown yew, and plant i' the stead of it
A withered black-thorn; and for that they vowed
To bury me alive. My husband straight
With pick-ax 'gan to dig, and your fell duchess
With shovel, like a fury, voided out
The earth and scattered bones: lord, how methought
I trembled! and yet for all this terror
I could not pray.
Flam. No; the devil was in your dream.
Vit. When to my rescue there arose, methought,
A whirlwind, which let fall a massy arm
From that strong plant;
And both were struck dead by that sacred yew,
In that base shallow grave that was their due.
Flam. Excellent devil! She hath taught him in a dream
To make away his duchess and her husband.
Brach. Sweetly shall I interpret this your dream.

You are lodged within his arms who shall protect you
From all the fevers of a jealous husband,
From the poor envy of our phlegmatic duchess.
I'll seat you above law, and above scandal;
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight,
And the fruition; nor shall government
Divide me from you longer, than a care
To keep you great: you shall to me at once,
Be dukedom, health, wife, children, friends, and all.
Cor. Woe to light hearts, they still fore-run our fall!
Flam. What fury raised thee up? away, away.
[*Exit* ZANCHE.
Cor. What make you here, my lord, this dead of night?
Never dropped mildew on a flower here till now.
Flam. I pray, will you go to bed then,
Lest you be blasted?
Cor. O that this fair garden
Had with all poisoned herbs of Thessaly
At first been planted; made a nursery
For witchcraft, rather than a burial plot
For both your honours!
Vit. Dearest mother, hear me.
Cor. O, thou dost make my brow bend to the earth,
Sooner than nature! See the curse of children!
In life they keep us frequently in tears;
And in the cold grave leave us in pale fears.
Brach. Come, come, I will not hear you.
Vit. Dear my lord—
Cor. Where is thy duchess now, adulterous duke?
Thou little dream'st this night she's come to Rome.
Flam. How! come to Rome!
Vit. The duchess!
Brach. She had been better—
Cor. The lives of princes should like dials move,
Whose regular example is so strong,
They make the times by them go right, or wrong.

Flam. So, have you done?
Cor. Unfortunate Camillo!
Vit. I do protest, if any chaste denial,
If any thing but blood could have allayed
His long suit to me —
Cor. I will join with thee,
To the most woeful end e'er mother kneeled:
If thou dishonour thus thy husband's bed,
Be thy life short as are the funeral tears
In great men's —
Brach. Fie, fie, the woman's mad.
Cor. Be thy act Judas-like; betray in kissing:
May'st thou be envied during his short breath,
And pitied like a wretch after his death!
Vit. O me accursed! [*Exit.*
Flam. Are you out of your wits? My lord,
I'll fetch her back again.
Brach. No, I'll to bed:
Send doctor Julio to me presently.
Uncharitable woman! thy rash tongue
Hath raised a fearful and prodigious storm:
Be thou the cause of all ensuing harm. [*Exit.*
Flam. Now, you that stand so much upon your honour,
Is this a fitting time a' night, think you,
To send a duke home without e'er a man?
I would fain know where lies the mass of wealth
Which you have hoarded for my maintenance,
That I may bear my beard out of the level
Of my lord's stirrup.[n]
Cor. What! because we are poor
Shall we be vicious?
Flam. Pray, what means have you
To keep me from the galleys, or the gallows?
My father proved himself a gentleman,
Sold all's land, and, like a fortunate fellow,
Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up

At Padua, I confess, where I protest,
For want of means — the university judge me —
I have been fain to heel my tutor's stockings,
At least seven years; conspiring with a beard,
Made me a graduate;[n] then to this duke's service.
I visited the court, whence I returned
More courteous, more lecherous by far,
But not a suit the richer: and shall I,
Having a path so open, and so free
To my preferment, still retain your milk
In my pale forehead? no, this face of mine
I'll arm, and fortify with lusty wine,
'Gainst shame and blushing.
Cor. O, that I ne'er had borne thee!
Flam. So would I;
I would the common'st courtezan in Rome
Had been my mother, rather than thyself.
Nature is very pitiful to whores,
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers; they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,
Complain unto my great lord cardinal;
It may be he will justify the act.
Lycurgus wondered much, men would provide
Good stallions for their mares, and yet would suffer
Their fair wives to be barren.
Cor. Misery of miseries! [*Exit.*
Flam. The duchess come to court! I like not that.
We are engaged to mischief, and must on;
As rivers to find out the ocean
Flow with crook bendings beneath forcèd banks,
Or as we see, to aspire some mountain's top,
The way ascends not straight, but imitates
The subtle foldings of a winter's snake,
So who knows policy and her true aspect,
Shall find her ways winding and indirect. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND

SCENE I[n]

Enter FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, Cardinal MONTICELSO, MARCELLO, ISABELLA, Young GIOVANNI, *with little* JAQUES *the Moor*

Fran. Have you not seen your husband since you arrived?
Isab. Not yet, sir.
Fran. Surely he is wondrous kind;
If I had such a dove-house as Camillo's,
I would set fire on't were't but to destroy
The pole-cats that haunt to it — My sweet cousin!
Giov. Lord uncle, you did promise me a horse,
And armour.
Fran. That I did, my pretty cousin.
Marcello, see it fitted.
Mar. My lord, the duke is here.
Fran. Sister, away!
You must not yet be seen.
Isab. I do beseech you
Entreat him mildly; let not your rough tongue
Set us at louder variance; all my wrongs[n]
Are freely pardoned; and I do not doubt,
As men, to try the precious unicorn's horn,
Make of the powder a preservative circle,
And in it put a spider,[n] so these arms
Shall charm his poison, force it to obeying,
And keep him chaste from an infected straying.[n]
Fran. I wish it may. Be gone: 'void the chamber.
[*Exeunt all but* MONTICELSO *and* FRANCISCO.

Enter BRACHIANO *and* FLAMINEO

You are welcome; will you sit? — I pray, my lord,
Be you my orator, my heart's too full;
I'll second you anon.
Mont. Ere I begin,
Let me entreat your grace forego all passion,
Which may be raised by my free discourse.
Brach. As silent as i' th' church: you may proceed.
Mont. It is a wonder to your noble friends,
That you, having as 'twere entered the world
With a free sceptre in your able hand,
And having to th' use of nature, well applied,
High gifts of learning, should in your prime age
Neglect your awful throne for the soft down
Of an insatiate bed. O my lord,
The drunkard after all his lavish cups
Is dry, and then is sober! so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dream,
Repentance then will follow, like the sting
Placed in the adder's tail. Wretched are princes
When fortune blasteth but a petty flower
Of their unwieldly crowns, or ravisheth
But one pearl from their sceptre; but alas!
When they to wilful shipwreck lose good fame,
All princely titles perish with their name.
Brach. You have said, my lord.
Mont. Enough to give you taste
How far I am from flattering your greatness.
Brach. Now, you that are his second, what say you?
Do not like young hawks fetch a course about;[n]
Your game flies fair, and for you.
Fran. Do not fear it:
I'll answer you in your own hawking phrase.
Some eagles that should gaze upon the sun
Seldom soar high, but take their lustful ease;
Since they from dunghill birds their prey can seize.

You know Vittoria?
Brach. Yes.
Fran. You shift your shirt there,
When you retire from tennis?
Brach. Happily.
Fran. Her husband is the lord of a poor fortune,
Yet she wears cloth of tissue.[n]
Brach. What of this?
Will you urge that, my good lord cardinal,
As part of her confession at next shrift,
And know from whence it sails?
Fran. She is your strumpet.
Brach. Uncivil sir, there's hemlock in thy breath,
And that black slander. Were she a whore of mine,
All thy loud cannons, and thy borrowed Switzers,[n]
Thy galleys, nor thy sworn confederates,
Durst not supplant her.
Fran. Let's not talk on thunder.
Thou hast a wife, our sister: would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and locked fast
In her last winding-sheet, when I gave thee
But one!
Brach. Thou had'st given a soul to God then.
Fran. True:
Thy ghostly father,[n] with all his absolution,
Shall ne'er do so by thee.
Brach. Spit thy poison.
Fran. I shall not need; lust carries her sharp whip
At her own girdle. Look to't, for our anger
Is making thunderbolts.
Brach. Thunder! in faith,
They are but crackers.
Fran. We'll end this with the cannon.
Brach. Thou'lt get nought by it, but iron in thy wounds,
And gunpowder in thy nostrils.

Fran. Better that,
Than change perfumes for plasters.[n]
Brach. Pity on thee!
'Twere good you'd show your slaves, or men condemned,
Your new-ploughed forehead-defiance![n] and I'll meet thee,
Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.
Mont. My lords, you shall not word it any further
Without a milder limit.
Fran. Willingly.
Brach. Have you proclaimed a triumph, that you bait
A lion thus?
Mont. My lord!
Brach. I am tame, I am tame, sir.
Fran. We send unto the duke for conference
'Bout levies 'gainst the pirates; my lord duke
Is not at home: we come ourself in person;
Still my lord duke is busied. But, we fear,
When Tiber to each prowling passenger
Discovers flocks of wild ducks, then, my lord —
'Bout moulting time, I mean — we shall be certain
To find you sure enough, and speak with you.
Brach. Ha!
Fran. A mere tale of a tub:[n] my words are idle.
But to express the sonnet by natural reason,[n]

Enter GIOVANNI

When stags grow melancholic[n] you'll find the season.
Mont. No more, my lord; here comes a champion
Shall end the difference between you both;
Your son, the prince Giovanni. See, my lords,
What hopes you store in him; this is a casket
For both your crowns, and should be held like dear.
Now is he apt for knowledge; therefore know
It is a more direct and even way,

To train to virtue those of princely blood,
By examples than by precepts: if by examples,
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Than his own father? be his pattern then,
Leave him a stock of virtue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sails, and split his mast.

Brach. Your hand, boy: growing to a soldier?

Giov. Give me a pike.

Fran. What, practising your pike so young, fair cousin?

Giov. Suppose me one of Homer's frogs,[n] my lord, 110
Tossing my bulrush thus. Pray, sir, tell me,
Might not a child of good discretion
Be leader to an army?

Fran. Yes, cousin, a young prince
Of good discretion might.

Giov. Say you so?
Indeed, I have heard 'tis fit a general
Should not endanger his own person oft;
So that he make a noise when he's a'horseback,
Like a Danske drummer, — O, 'tis excellent! —
He need not fight! methinks his horse as well
Might lead an army for him. If I live, 120
I'll charge the French foe in the very front
Of all my troops, the foremost man.

Fran. What! what!

Giov. And will not bid my soldiers up, and follow,[n]
But bid them follow me.

Brach. Forward lap-wing!
He flies with the shell on's head.

Fran. Pretty cousin!

Giov. The first year, uncle, that I go to war,
All prisoners that I take, I will set free,
Without their ransom.

Fran. Ha! without their ransom!
How then will you reward your soldiers,
That took those prisoners for you?

Giov. Thus, my lord:
I'll marry them to all the wealthy widows
That fall that year.[n]
Fran. Why then, the next year following,
You'll have no men to go with you to war.
Giov. Why then I'll press [n] the women to the war,
And then the men will follow.
Mont. Witty prince!
Fran. See, a good habit makes a child a man,
Whereas a bad one makes a man a beast.
Come, you and I are friends.
Brach. Most wishedly:
Like bones which, broke in sunder, and well set,
Knit the more strongly.
Fran. Call Camillo hither. —
[*Exit* Servant.
You have received the rumour, how Count Lodowick
Is turned a pirate?
Brach. Yes.
Fran. We are now preparing
Some ships to fetch him in. Behold your duchess.
We now will leave you, and expect from you
Nothing but kind entreaty.
Brach. You have charmed me.[n]
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *and* GIOVANNI.

Enter ISABELLA

You are in health, we see.
Isab. And above health,
To see my lord well.
Brach. So:[n] I wonder much
What amorous whirlwind hurried you to Rome.
Isab. Devotion, my lord.
Brach. Devotion!
Is your soul charged with any grievous sin?
Isab. 'Tis burdened with too many; and I think
The oftener that we cast our reckonings up,

Our sleeps will be the sounder.
Brach. Take your chamber.
Isab. Nay, my dear lord, I will not have you angry!
Doth not my absence from you, now two months,
Merit one kiss?
Brach. I do not use to kiss:
If that will dispossess your jealousy,
I'll swear it to you.
Isab. O my lovèd lord,
I do not come to chide: my jealousy!
I am to learn what that Italian means.[n]
You are as welcome to these longing arms,
As I to you a virgin.[n]
Brach. O, your breath!
Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic,
The plague is in them!
Isab. You have oft, for these two lips,
Neglected cassia, or the natural sweets
Of the spring-violet: they are not yet much withered.
My lord, I should be merry: these your frowns
Show in a helmet lovely; but on me,
In such a peaceful interview, methinks
They are too too roughly knit.
Brach. O dissemblance!
Do you bandy factions 'gainst me? have you learnt
The trick of impudent baseness, to complain
Unto your kindred?
Isab. Never, my dear lord.
Brach. Must I be hunted out? or was't your trick
To meet some amorous gallant here in Rome,
That must supply our discontinuance?
Isab. I pray, sir, burst my heart; and in my death
Turn to your ancient pity, though not love.
Brach. Because your brother is the corpulent duke,
That is, the great duke, 'sdeath, I shall not, shortly,
Racket away five hundred crowns at tennis,
But it shall rest upon record! I scorn him

Like a shavèd Polack: [n] all his reverend wit
Lies in his wardrobe; he's a discreet fellow,
When he's made up in his robes of state.
Your brother, the great duke, because h'as galleys,
And now and then ransacks a Turkish fly-boat,
(Now all the hellish furies take his soul!)
First made this match: accursèd be the priest
That sang the wedding-mass, and even my issue!
Isab. O, too too far you have cursed!
Brach. Your hand I'll kiss;
This is the latest ceremony of my love.
Henceforth I'll never lie with thee; by this,
This wedding-ring, I'll ne'er more lie with thee!
And this divorce shall be as truly kept,
As if the judge had doomed it. Fare you well:
Our sleeps are severed.
Isab. Forbid it, the sweet union
Of all things blessèd! why, the saints in heaven
Will knit their brows at that.
Brach. Let not thy love
Make thee an unbeliever; this my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance: let thy brother rage
Beyond a horrid tempest, or sea-fight,
My vow is fixèd.
Isab. O my winding-sheet!
Now shall I need thee shortly. Dear my lord,
Let me hear once more, what I would not hear:
Never?
Brach. Never.
Isab. O my unkind lord! may your sins find mercy.
As I upon a woeful widowed bed
Shall pray for you, if not to turn your eyes
Upon your wretched wife and hopeful son,
Yet that in time you'll fix them upon heaven!
Brach. No more; go, go, complain to the great duke.
Isab. No, my dear lord; you shall have present witness

How I'll work peace between you. I will make
Myself the author of your cursèd vow;
I have some cause to do it, you have none.
Conceal it, I beseech you, for the weal
Of both your dukedoms, that you wrought the means
Of such a separation: let the fault
Remain with my supposèd jealousy,
And think with what a piteous and rent heart
I shall perform this sad ensuing part.

Enter FRANCISCO, FLAMINEO, MONTICELSO, *and* MARCELLO

Brach. Well, take your course. — My honourable brother!

Fran. Sister! — This is not well, my lord. — Why, sister! —

She merits not this welcome.

Brach. Welcome, say!

She hath given me a sharp welcome.

Fran. Are you foolish?

Come, dry your tears: is this a modest course
To better what is naught, to rail and weep?
Grow to a reconcilement, or, by Heaven,
I'll ne'er more deal between you.

Isab. Sir, you shall not;

No, though Vittoria, upon that condition,
Would become honest.

Fran. Was your husband loud

Since we departed?

Isab. By my life, sir, no,

I swear by that I do not care to lose.
Are all these ruins of my former beauty
Laid out for a whore's triumph?

Fran. Do you hear?

Look upon other women, with what patience
They suffer these slight wrongs, and with what justice
They study to requite them: take that course.

Isab. O that I were a man, or that I had power
To execute my apprehended wishes!
I would whip some with scorpions.
Fran. What! turned fury!
Isab. To dig the strumpet's eyes out; let her lie
Some twenty months a dying; to cut off
Her nose and lips, pull out her rotten teeth;
Preserve her flesh like mummia, for trophies
Of my just anger! Hell, to my affliction,
Is mere snow-water. By your favour, sir; —
Brother, draw near, and my lord cardinal; —
Sir, let me borrow of you but one kiss;
Henceforth I'll never lie with you, by this,
This wedding-ring.
Fran. How, ne'er more lie with him!
Isab. And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if in throngèd court a thousand ears
Had heard it, and a thousand lawyers' hands
Sealed to the separation.
Brach. Ne'er lie with me!
Isab. Let not my former dotage
Make thee an unbeliever; this my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance: *manet alta mente repostum.*[n]
Fran. Now, by my birth, you are a foolish, mad,
And jealous woman.
Brach. You see 'tis not my seeking.
Fran. Was this your circle of pure unicorn's horn,
You said should charm your lord? now horns upon thee,
For jealousy deserves them! Keep your vow
And take your chamber.
Isab. No, sir, I'll presently to Padua;
I will not stay a minute.
Mont. O good madam!
Brach. 'Twere best to let her have her humour;
Some half day's journey will bring down her stomach,[n]
And then she'll turn in post.

Fran. To see her come
To my lord cardinal for a dispensation
Of her rash vow, will beget excellent laughter.
Isab. Unkindness, do thy office; poor heart, break:
Those are the killing griefs, which dare not speak.
[*Exit.*
Mar. Camillo's come, my lord.

Enter CAMILLO

Fran. Where's the commission?
Mar. 'Tis here.
Fran. Give me the signet.
[*Exeunt all but* BRACHIANO *and* FLAMINEO.
Flam. My lord, do you mark their whispering? I will compound a medicine, out of their two heads, stronger than garlic, deadlier than stibium: the cantharides, which are scarce seen to stick upon the flesh, when they work to the heart, shall not do it with more silence or invisible cunning.
Brach. About the murder?

Enter Doctor

Flam. They are sending him to Naples, but I'll send him to Candy.[n] Here's another property too.[n]
Brach. O, the doctor!
Flam. A poor quacksalving knave, my lord; one that should have been lashed for's lechery, but that he confessed a judgement, had an execution laid upon him, and so put the whip to a *non plus*.[n]
Doc. And was cozened, my lord, by an arranter knave than myself, and made pay all the colourable execution.
Flam. He will shoot pills into a man's guts shall make them have more ventages than a cornet or a lamprey; he will poison a kiss; and was once minded, for his masterpiece, because Ireland breeds no poison, to have prepared a deadly vapour in a Spaniard's fart, that should have poisoned all Dublin.

Brach. O Saint Anthony's fire!

Doc. Your secretary is merry, my lord.

Flam. O thou cursed antipathy to nature! Look, his eye's bloodshed, like a needle a chirurgeon stitcheth a wound with. Let me embrace thee, toad, and love thee, O thou abominable, loathsome gargarism, that will fetch up lungs, lights, heart, and liver, by scruples!

Brach. No more.—I must employ thee, honest doctor:
You must to Padua, and by the way,
Use some of your skill for us.

Doc. Sir, I shall.

Brach. But for Camillo?

Flam. He dies this night, by such a politic strain,
Men shall suppose him by's own engine slain.
But for your duchess' death—

Doc. I'll make her sure.

Brach. Small mischiefs are by greater made secure.

Flam. Remember this, you slave; when knaves come to preferment, they rise as gallowses are raised i' th' Low Countries, one upon another's shoulders.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MONTICELSO, CAMILLO, FRANCISCO, MARCELLO

Mont. Here is an emblem, nephew, pray peruse it:
'Twas thrown in at your window.

Cam. At my window!
Here is a stag, my lord, hath shed his horns,
And, for the loss of them, the poor beast weeps:
The word, *Inopem me copia fecit.*

Mont. That is,
Plenty of horns hath made him poor of horns.

Cam. What should this mean?

Mont. I'll tell you; 'tis given out
You are a cuckold.

Cam. Is it given out so?
I had rather such report as that, my lord,

Should keep within doors.
Fran. Have you any children?
Cam. None, my lord.
Fran. You are the happier:
I'll tell you a tale.
Cam. Pray, my lord.
Fran. An old tale.
Upon a time Phœbus, the god of light,
Or him we call the Sun, would need be married:
The gods gave their consent, and Mercury
Was sent to voice it to the general world.
But what a piteous cry there straight arose
Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and cooks,
Reapers and butter-women, amongst fishmongers,
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heat! 'twas lamentable.
They came to Jupiter all in a sweat,
And do forbid the bans. A great fat cook
Was made their speaker, who entreats of Jove
That Phœbus might be gelded; for if now,
When there was but one sun, so many men
Were like to perish by his violent heat,
What should they do if he were married,
And should beget more, and those children
Make fireworks like their father? So say I;
Only I will apply it to your wife;
Her issue, should not providence prevent it,
Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.
Mont. Look you, cousin,
Go, change the air, for shame; see if your absence
Will blast your cornucopia.[n] Marcello
Is chosen with you joint commissioner,
For the relieving our Italian coast
From pirates.
Mar. I am much honoured in't.
Cam. But, sir,
Ere I return, the stag's horns may be sprouted

Greater than those are shed.
Mont. Do not fear it;
I'll be your ranger.
Cam. You must watch i'th' nights;
Then's the most danger.
Fran. Farewell, good Marcello:
All the best fortunes of a soldier's wish
Bring you a-shipboard.
Cam. Were I not best, now I am turned soldier,
Ere that I leave my wife, sell all she hath,
And then take leave of her?
Mont. I expect good from you,
Your parting is so merry.
Cam. Merry, my lord! a' th' captain's humour right,
I am resolved to be drunk this night.
[*Exeunt* MARCELLO *and* CAMILLO.
Fran. So, 'twas well fitted; now shall we discern
How his wished absence will give violent way
To Duke Brachiano's lust.
Mont. Why, that was it;
To what scorned purpose else should we make choice
Of him for a sea-captain? and, besides,
Count Lodowick, which was rumoured for a pirate,
Is now in Padua.
Fran. Is't true?
Mont. Most certain.
I have letters from him, which are suppliant
To work his quick repeal from banishment:
He means to address himself for pension
Unto our sister duchess.
Fran. O, 'twas well!
We shall not want his absence past six days:
I fain would have the Duke Brachiano run
Into notorious scandal; for there's nought
In such cursed dotage, to repair his name,
Only the deep sense of some deathless shame.
Mont. It may be objected, I am dishonourable

To play thus with my kinsman; but I answer,
For my revenge I'd stake a brother's life,
That, being wronged, durst not avenge himself.
Fran. Come, to observe this strumpet.
Mont. Curse of greatness!
Sure he'll not leave her?
Fran. There's small pity in't:
Like mistletoe on sear elms spent by weather,
Let him cleave to her, and both rot together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

SCENE I[n]

Enter BRACHIANO, *with one in the habit of a conjurer*

Brach. Now, sir, I claim your promise: 'tis dead midnight,
The time prefixed to show me, by your art,
How the intended murder of Camillo,
And our loathed duchess, grow to action.
Con. You have won me, by your bounty, to a deed
I do not often practise. Some there are,
Which by sophistic tricks, aspire that name
Which I would gladly lose, of necromancer;
As some that use to juggle upon cards,
Seeming to conjure, when indeed they cheat;
Others that raise up their confederate spirits
'Bout windmills, and endanger their own necks
For making of a squib; and some there are
Will keep a curtal [n] to show juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit; besides these,
Such a whole ream of almanac-makers, figure-flingers,
Fellows, indeed, that only live by stealth,
Since they do merely lie about stol'n goods,
They'd make men think the devil were fast and loose,
With speaking fustian Latin. Pray, sit down;
Put on this night-cap, sir, 'tis charmed; and now
I'll show you, by my strong commanding art,
The circumstance that breaks your duchess' heart.

A Dumb Show

Enter suspiciously JULIO *and* CHRISTOPHERO: *they draw a curtain where* BRACHIANO'S *picture is; they put on spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses, and*

then burn perfumes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture; that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles, they depart laughing.

Enter ISABELLA *in her nightgown, as to bed-ward, with lights after her,* Count LODOVICO, GIOVANNI, GASPARO, ANTONELLI, *and others waiting on her: she kneels down as to prayers, then draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice; she faints, and will not suffer them to come near it; dies; sorrow expressed in* GIOVANNI, *and in* Count LODOVICO. *She's conveyed out solemnly.*

Brach. Excellent! then she's dead.
Con. She's poisoned
By the fumed picture. 'Twas her custom nightly,
Before she went to bed, to go and visit
Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lips
On the dead shadow: doctor Julio,
Observing this, infects it with an oil,
And other poisoned stuff, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits.
Brach. Methought I saw
Count Lodowick there.
Con. He was; and by my art,
I find he did most passionately dote
Upon your duchess. Now turn another way,
And view Camillo's far more politic fate.
Strike louder, music, from this charmèd ground,
To yield, as fits the act, a tragic sound!

The Second Dumb Show

Enter FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, CAMILLO, *with four more, as captains: they drink healths, and dance; a vaulting horse is brought into the room;* MARCELLO *and two more whispered out of the room, while* FLAMINEO *and* CAMILLO

strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault ; they compliment who shall begin;[n] *as* CAMILLO *is about to vault,* FLAMINEO *pitcheth him upon his neck, and, with the help of the rest, writhes his neck about; seems to see if it be broke, and lays him folded double, as 'twere, under the horse; makes shows to call for help;* MARCELLO *comes in, laments; sends for the cardinal and duke, who come forth with armed men; wonder at the act; command the body to be carried home; apprehend* FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, *and the rest, and go, as 'twere, to apprehend* VITTORIA.

Brach. 'Twas quaintly done; but yet each circumstance
I taste not fully.
Con. O, 'twas most apparent!
You saw them enter, charged with their deep healths
To their bon voyage; and, to second that,
Flamineo calls to have a vaulting horse
Maintain their sport; the virtuous Marcello
Is innocently plotted forth the room;[n]
Whilst your eye saw the rest, and can inform you
The engine of all.[n]
Brach. It seems Marcello and Flamineo
Are both committed.
Con. Yes, you saw them guarded;
And now they are come with purpose to apprehend
Your mistress, fair Vittoria. We are now
Beneath her roof: 'twere fit we instantly
Make out by some back postern.
Brach. Noble friend,
You bind me ever to you: this shall stand[n]
As the firm seal annexèd to my hand;
It shall enforce a payment.
Con. Sir, I thank you.
[*Exit* BRACHIANO.
Both flowers and weeds spring, when the sun is warm,
And great men do great good, or else great harm. [*Exit.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, *and* MONTICELSO, *their* Chancellor *and* Register

Fran. You have dealt discreetly, to obtain the presence
Of all the grave lieger ambassadors
To hear Vittoria's trial.
Mont. 'Twas not ill;
For, sir, you know we have nought but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husband's death:
Their approbation,[n] therefore, to the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all our neighbouring kingdoms. I wonder
If Brachiano will be here?
Fran. O fie!
'Twere impudence too palpable. [*Exeunt.* 10

Enter FLAMINEO *and* MARCELLO *guarded, and a* Lawyer

Lawyer. What, are you in by the week?[n] so, I will try now whether thy wit be close prisoner. Methinks none should sit upon thy sister,[n] but old whore-masters.

Flam. Or cuckolds; for your cuckold is your most terrible tickler of lechery. Whore-masters would serve, for none are judges at tilting, but those that have been old tilters.

Lawyer. My lord duke and she have been very private.

Flam. You are a dull ass; 'tis threatened they have been very public. 20

Lawyer. If it can be proved they have but kissed one another —

Flam. What then?

Lawyer. My lord cardinal will ferret them.

Flam. A cardinal, I hope, will not catch conies.[n]

Lawyer. For to sow kisses (mark what I say), to sow kisses is to reap lechery; and, I am sure, a woman that will endure kissing is half won.

Flam. True, her upper part, by that rule; if you will win her nether part too, you know what follows.

Lawyer. Hark! the ambassadors are 'lighted.

Flam. I do put on this feigned garb of mirth,
To gull suspicion.

Mar. O my unfortunate sister!
I would my dagger-point had cleft her heart
When she first saw Brachiano: you, 'tis said,
Were made his engine, and his stalking-horse,
To undo my sister.

Flam. I made a kind of path
To her, and mine own preferment.

Mar. Your ruin.

Flam. Hum! thou art a soldier,
Followest the great duke, feed'st his victories,
As witches do their serviceable spirits,
Even with thy prodigal blood: what hast got?
But, like the wealth of captains, a poor handful,
Which in thy palm thou bear'st, as men hold water;
Seeking to gripe it fast, the frail reward
Steals through thy fingers.

Mar. Sir!

Flam. Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keep thee in fresh shamois.

Mar. Brother!

Flam. Hear me:
And thus, when we have even poured ourselves
Into great fights, for their ambition,
Or idle spleen, how shall we find reward?
But as we seldom find the mistletoe
Sacred to physic, or the builder oak,[n]
Without a mandrake by it; so in our quest of gain,
Alas, the poorest of their forced dislikes
At a limb proffers, but at heart it strikes!

This is lamented doctrine.

Mar. Come, come.

Flam. When age shall turn thee
White as a blooming hawthorn —

Mar. I'll interrupt you:
For love of virtue bear an honest heart,
And stride o'er every politic respect,[n]
Which, where they most advance, they most infect.
Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitious to leave you
A better patrimony.

Flam. I'll think on't.
The lord ambassadors.

[*The* Ambassadors *pass over the stage severally.*

Lawyer. O my sprightly Frenchman! Do you know him? he's an admirable tilter.

Flam. I saw him at last tilting: he showed like a pewter candlestick fashioned like a man in armour, holding a tilting staff in his hand, little bigger than a candle of twelve i' th' pound.

Lawyer. O, but he's an excellent horseman!

Flam. A lame one in his lofty tricks; he sleeps a-horseback, like a poulter.

Lawyer. Lo you, my Spaniard!

Flam. He carries his face in's ruff, as I have seen a serving-man carry glasses in a cypress hatband, monstrous steady, for fear of breaking; he looks like the claw of a blackbird, first salted, and then broiled in a candle.[n] [*Exeunt.*

The Arraignment of VITTORIA

Enter FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *the six lieger* Ambassadors, BRACHIANO, VITTORIA, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, Lawyer, *and a* Guard

Mont. Forbear, my lord, here is no place assigned you.
This business, by his holiness, is left
To our examination.

Brach. May it thrive with you!
[*Lays a rich gown under him.*
Fran. A chair there for his lordship.
Brach. Forbear your kindness: an unbidden guest
Should travel as Dutch women go to church,
Bear their stools with them.
Mont. At your pleasure, sir.
Stand to the table, gentlewoman. Now, signior,
Fall to your plea.
Lawyer. Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem, mulierum corruptissimam.[n] 91
Vit. What's he?
Fran. A lawyer that pleads against you.
Vit. Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue,
I'll make no answer else.
Fran. Why, you understand Latin.
Vit. I do, sir, but amongst this auditory
Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
May be ignorant in't.
Mont. Go on, sir.
Vit. By your favour,
I will not have my accusation clouded
In a strange tongue: all this assembly
Shall hear what you can charge me with.
Fran. Signior, 100
You need not stand on't much; pray, change your language.
Mont. O, for God's sake — Gentlewoman, your credit
Shall be more famous by it.
Lawyer. Well then, have at you.
Vit. I am at the mark, sir; I'll give aim[n] to you,
And tell you how near you shoot.
Lawyer. Most literated judges, please your lordships
So to connive your judgements to the view
Of this debauched and diversivolent[n] woman;
Who such a black concatenation
Of mischief hath effected, that to extirp 110

The memory of't, must be the consummation
Of her, and her projections —
Vit. What's all this?
Lawyer. Hold your peace!
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.
Vit. Surely, my lords, this lawyer here hath swallowed
Some 'pothecaries bills, or proclamations;
And now the hard and undigestible words
Come up, like stones we use give hawks for physic.
Why, this is Welsh to Latin.[n]
Lawyer. My lords, the woman
Knows not her tropes, nor figures, nor is perfect
In the academic derivation
Of grammatical elocution.
Fran. Sir, your pains
Shall be well spared, and your deep eloquence
Be worthily applauded amongst those
Which understand you.
Lawyer. My good lord —
Fran. Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian[n] bag,
[FRANCISCO *speaks this as in scorn.*
Cry mercy, sir, 'tis buckram, and accept
My notion of your learned verbosity.
Lawyer. I most graduatically thank your lordship:
I shall have use for them elsewhere. [*Exit.*
Mont. I shall be plainer with you, and paint out
Your follies in more natural red and white
Than upon your cheek.
Vit. O, you mistake!
You raise a blood as noble in this cheek
As ever was your mother's.
Mont. I must spare you, till proof cry whore to that.
Observe this creature here, my honoured lords,
A woman of a most prodigious spirit,
In her effected.[n]
Vit. My honourable lord,

It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus.
Mont. O, your trade instructs your language!
You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems;
Yet like those apples travellers report
To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah stood,
I will but touch her, and you straight shall see
She'll fall to soot and ashes.[n]
Vit. Your envenomed
'Pothecary should do't.
Mont. I am resolved,
Were there a second Paradise to lose,
This devil would betray it.
Vit. O poor charity!
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.[n]
Mont. Who knows not how, when several night by night
Her gates were choked with coaches, and her rooms
Outbraved the stars with several kind of lights;
When she did counterfeit a prince's court
In music, banquets, and most riotous surfeits;
This whore forsooth was holy.
Vit. Ha! whore! what's that?
Mont. Shall I expound whore to you? sure, I shall;
I'll give their perfect character. They are first,
Sweetmeats which rot the eater; in man's nostrils
Poisoned perfumes. They are cozening alchemy;
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores!
Cold Russian winters, that appear so barren,
As if that nature had forgot the spring.
They are the true material fire of hell:
Worse than those tributes i' th' Low Countries paid,
Exactions upon meat, drink, garments, sleep,
Aye, even on man's perdition, his sin.
They are those brittle evidences of law,
Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate
For leaving out one syllable. What are whores!

They are those flattering bells have all one tune,
At weddings and at funerals. Your rich whores
Are only treasuries by extortion filled,
And emptied by cursed riot. They are worse,
Worse than dead bodies which are begged at gallows,
And wrought upon by surgeons, to teach man
Wherein he is imperfect. What's a whore!
She's like the guilty counterfeited coin,
Which, whosoe'er first stamps it, brings in trouble
All that receive it.
Vit. This character scapes me.
Mont. You, gentlewoman!
Take from all beasts and from all minerals
Their deadly poison —
Vit. Well, what then?
Mont. I'll tell thee;
I'll find in thee a 'pothecary's shop,
To sample them all.[n]
Fr. Amb. She hath lived ill.
Eng. Amb. True, but the cardinal's too bitter.
Mont. You know what whore is. Next the devil adultery,
Enters the devil murder.
Fran. Your unhappy
Husband is dead.
Vit. O, he's a happy husband![n]
Now he owes nature nothing.
Fran. And by a vaulting engine.
Mont. An active plot,
He jumped into his grave.
Fran. What a prodigy was 't,
That from some two yards' height, a slender man
Should break his neck!
Mont. I' th' rushes![n]
Fran. And what's more,
Upon the instant lose all use of speech,

All vital motion, like a man had lain
Wound up[n] three days. Now mark each circumstance.
Mont. And look upon this creature was his wife!
She comes not like a widow; she comes armed
With scorn and impudence: is this a mourning habit?
Vit. Had I foreknown his death, as you suggest,
I would have bespoke my mourning.
Mont. O, you are cunning
Vit. You shame your wit and judgement,
To call it so. What! is my just defence
By him that is my judge called impudence?
Let me appeal then from this Christian court[n]
To the uncivil Tartar.
Mont. See, my lords,
She scandals our proceedings.
Vit. Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the most worthy and respected
Lieger ambassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender; but withal,
So entangled in a cursèd accusation,
That my defence, of force, like Portia's,[n]
Must personate masculine virtue. To the point.
Find me but guilty, sever head from body,
We'll part good friends: I scorn to hold my life
At yours, or any man's entreaty, sir.
Eng. Amb. She hath a brave spirit.
Mont. Well, well, such counterfeit jewels
Make true ones oft suspected.
Vit. You are deceived:
For know, that all your strict-combinèd heads,
Which strike against this mine of diamonds,
Shall prove but glassen hammers: they shall break.
These are but feigned shadows of my evils.
Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils,
I am past such needless palsy. For your names
Of whore and murderess, they proceed from you,

As if a man should spit against the wind:
The filth returns in 's face.
Mont. Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question:
Who lodged beneath your roof that fatal night
Your husband brake his neck?
Brach. That question
Enforceth me break silence: I was there.
Mont. Your business?
Brach. Why, I came to comfort her,
And take some course for settling her estate,
Because I heard her husband was in debt
To you, my lord.
Mont. He was.
Brach. And 'twas strangely feared,
That you would cozen her.
Mont. Who made you overseer?
Brach. Why, my charity, my charity, which should flow
From every generous and noble spirit,
To orphans and to widows.
Mont. Your lust!
Brach. Cowardly dogs bark loudest: sirrah priest,
I'll talk with you hereafter. Do you hear?
The sword you frame of such an excellent temper,
I'll sheathe in your own bowels.
There are a number of thy coat resemble
Your common post-boys.
Mont. Ha!
Brach. Your mercenary post-boys;
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
To fill your mouths with gross and impudent lies.[n]
Serv. My lord, your gown.
Brach. Thou liest, 'twas my stool:
Bestow't upon thy master, that will challenge
The rest a' th' household-stuff; for Brachiano
Was ne'er so beggarly to take a stool
Out of another's lodging: let him make

Vallance for his bed on't, or a demy foot-cloth[n]
For his most reverend moile. Monticelso,
Nemo me impune lacessit. [*Exit.*
Mont. Your champion's gone.
Vit. The wolf may prey the better.
Fran. My lord, there's great suspicion of the murder,
But no sound proof who did it. For my part,
I do not think she hath a soul so black
To act a deed so bloody; if she have,
As in cold countries husbandmen plant vines,
And with warm blood manure them; even so
One summer she will bear unsavoury fruit,
And ere next spring wither both branch and root.
The act of blood let pass;[n] only descend
To matter of incontinence.
Vit. I discern poison
Under your gilded pills.
Mont. Now the duke's gone, I will produce a letter
Wherein 'twas plotted, he and you should meet
At an apothecary's summer-house,
Down by the river Tiber, — view't my lords, —
Where after wanton bathing and the heat
Of a lascivious banquet — I pray read it,
I shame to speak the rest.
Vit. Grant I was tempted;
Temptation to lust proves not the act:
Casta est quam nemo rogavit.[n]
You read his hot love to me, but you want
My frosty answer.
Mont. Frost i' th' dog-days! strange!
Vit. Condemn you me for that the duke did love me?
So may you blame some fair and crystal river,
For that some melancholic distracted man
Hath drowned himself in't.
Mont. Truly drowned, indeed.
Vit. Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find,
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,

And a good stomach to feast, are all,
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with.
In faith, my lord, you might go pistol flies,
The sport would be more noble.
Mont. Very good.
Vit. But take you your course: it seems you've beggared me first,
And now would fain undo me. I have houses,
Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes;
Would those would make you charitable!
Mont. If the devil
Did ever take good shape, behold his picture.
Vit. You have one virtue left, — you will not flatter me.
Fran. Who brought this letter?
Vit. I am not compelled to tell you.
Mont. My lord duke sent to you a thousand ducats
The twelfth of August.
Vit. 'Twas to keep your cousin
From prison; I paid use for't.
Mont. I rather think,
'Twas interest for his lust.
Vit. Who says so but yourself? if you be my accuser,
Pray cease to be my judge: come from the bench;
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators. My lord cardinal,
Were your intelligencing ears as loving
As to my thoughts,[n] had you an honest tongue,
I would not care though you proclaimed them all.
Mont. Go to, go to.
After your goodly and vainglorious banquet,
I'll give you a choke-pear.
Vit. A' your own grafting?
Mont. You were born in Venice, honourably descended
From the Vittelli: 'twas my cousin's fate, —
Ill may I name the hour, — to marry you;
He bought you of your father.

Vit. Ha!
Mont. He spent there in six months
Twelve thousand ducats, and (to my acquaintance)
Received in dowry with you not one julio:
'Twas a hard pennyworth, the ware being so light.
I yet but draw the curtain; now to your picture:
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet,
And so you have continued.
Vit. My lord!
Mont. Nay, hear me,
You shall have time to prate. My lord Brachiano—
Alas! I make but repetition,
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,[n]
And ballated, and would be played a' th' stage,
But that vice many times finds such loud friends,
That preachers are charmed silent.
You, gentlemen, Flamineo and Marcello,
The court hath nothing now to charge you with,
Only you must remain upon your sureties
For your appearance.
Fran. I stand for Marcello.
Flam. And my lord duke for me.
Mont. For you, Vittoria, your public fault,
Joined to th' condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity,
Such a corrupted trial have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and been styled
No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
To princes. Hear your sentence: you are confined
Unto a house of convertites,[n] and your bawd—
Flam. Who, I?
Mont. The Moor.
Flam. O, I am a sound man again.
Vit. A house of convertites! what's that?
Mont. A house
Of penitent whores.
Vit. Do the noblemen in Rome

Erect it for their wives, that I am sent
To lodge there?
Fran. You must have patience.
Vit. I must first have vengeance.
I fain would know if you have your salvation
By patent, that you proceed thus.
Mont. Away with her! Take her hence.
Vit. A rape! a rape!
Mont. How?
Vit. Yes, you have ravished justice;
Forced her to do your pleasure.
Mont. Fie, she's mad!
Vit. Die with those pills in your most cursèd maw,
Should bring you health! or while you sit o' th' bench,
Let your own spittle choke you!
Mont. She's turned fury.
Vit. That the last day of judgement may so find you,
And leave you the same devil you were before!
Instruct me, some good horse-leech, to speak treason;
For since you cannot take my life for deeds,
Take it for words. O woman's poor revenge,
Which dwells but in the tongue! I will not weep;
No, I do scorn to call up one poor tear
To fawn on your injustice: bear me hence
Unto this house of — what's your mitigating title?
Mont. Of convertites.
Vit. It shall not be a house of convertites;
My mind shall make it honester to me
Than the Pope's palace, and more peaceable
Than thy soul, though thou art a cardinal.
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite,
Through darkness diamonds spread their richest light.
[*Exit guarded.*

Enter BRACHIANO

Brach. Now you and I are friends, sir, we'll shake hands

In a friend's grave together,[n] a fit place,
Being th' emblem of soft peace, t'atone our hatred.
Fran. Sir, what's the matter?
Brach. I will not chase more blood from that loved cheek;
You have lost too much already; fare you well. [*Exit.*
Fran. How strange these words sound! what's the interpretation?
Flam. [*Aside.*] Good; this is a preface to the discovery of the duchess's death: he carries it well. Because now I cannot counterfeit a whining passion for the death of my lady, I will feign a mad humour for the disgrace of my sister; and that will keep off idle questions. Treason's tongue hath a villainous palsy in't; I will talk to any man, hear no man, and for a time appear a politic madman. [*Exit.*

Enter GIOVANNI, *and* Count LODOVICO

Fran. How now, my noble cousin? what, in black!
Giov. Yes, uncle, I was taught to imitate you
In virtue, and you must imitate me
In colours of your garments. My sweet mother
Is —
Fran. How? where?
Giov. Is there; no, yonder: indeed, sir, I'll not tell you,
For I shall make you weep.
Fran. Is dead?
Giov. Do not blame me now,
I did not tell you so.
Lod. She's dead, my lord.
Fran. Dead!
Mont. Blessed lady, thou art now above thy woes!
Wilt please your lordships to withdraw a little?[n]
[*Exeunt* Ambassadors.

Giov. What do the dead do, uncle? do they eat,
Hear music, go a hunting, and be merry,
As we that live?
Fran. No, coz; they sleep.
Giov. Lord, lord, that I were dead!
I have not slept these six nights. When do they wake?
Fran. When God shall please.
Giov. Good God, let her sleep ever!
For I have known her wake an hundred nights,
When all the pillow where she laid her head
Was brine-wet with her tears. I am to complain to you, sir;
I'll tell you how they have used her now she's dead:
They wrapped her in a cruel fold of lead,
And would not let me kiss her.
Fran. Thou did'st love her.
Giov. I have often heard her say she gave me suck,
And it should seem by that she dearly loved me,
Since princes seldom do it.
Fran. O, all of my poor sister that remains!
Take him away for God's sake? [*Exit* GIOVANNI.
Mont. How now, my lord?
Fran. Believe me, I am nothing but her grave;
And I shall keep her blessed memory
Longer than thousand epitaphs.

Enter FLAMINEO *as distracted*

Flam. We endure the strokes like anvils or hard steel,
Till pain itself make us no pain to feel.
Who shall do me right now? is this the end of service? I'd rather go weed garlic; travel through France, and be mine own ostler; wear sheep-skin linings, or shoes that stink of blacking; be entered into the list of the forty thousand pedlars in Poland.

Enter Savoy Ambassador

Would I had rotted in some surgeon's house at Venice, built upon the pox as well as on piles, ere I had served Brachiano!

Savoy Amb. You must have comfort.

Flam. Your comfortable words are like honey: they relish well in your mouth that's whole, but in mine that's wounded, they go down as if the sting of the bee were in them. O, they have wrought their purpose cunningly, as if they would not seem to do it of malice! In this a politician imitates the devil, as the devil imitates a cannon; wheresoever he comes to do mischief, he comes with his backside towards you.

Enter French *and* English Ambassadors

French Amb. The proofs are evident.

Flam. Proof! 'twas corruption. O gold, what a god art thou! and O man, what a devil art thou to be tempted by that cursed mineral! Yon diversivolent lawyer, mark him! knaves turn informers, as maggots turn to flies, you may catch gudgeons with either. A cardinal! I would he would hear me: there's nothing so holy but money will corrupt and putrify it, like victual under the line.[n] You are happy in England, my lord; here they sell justice with those weights they press men to death with.[n] O horrible salary!

Eng. Amb. Fie, fie, Flamineo.

[*Exeunt* Ambassadors.

Flam. Bells ne'er ring well, till they are at their full pitch; and I hope yon cardinal shall never have the grace to pray well, till he come to the scaffold. If they were racked now to know the confederacy: but your noblemen are privileged from the rack; and well may, for a little thing would pull some of them a'pieces afore they came to their arraignment. Religion, O how it is commeddled with policy! The first blood shed in

the world happened about religion.[n] Would I were a Jew![n]

Mar. O, there are too many!

Flam. You are deceived; there are not Jews enough, priests enough, nor gentlemen enough.

Mar. How?

Flam. I'll prove it; for if there were Jews enough, so many Christians would not turn usurers; if priests enough, one should not have six benefices; and if gentlemen enough, so many early mushrooms, whose best growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to gentility. Farewell: let others live by begging: be thou one of them practise the art of Wolner in England[n] to swallow all's given thee: and yet let one purgation make thee as hungry again as fellows that work in a saw-pit. I'll go hear the screech-owl. [*Exit.*

Lod. This was Brachiano's pander; and 'tis strange
That in such open, and apparent guilt
Of his adulterous sister, he dare utter
So scandalous a passion. I must wind him.

Re-enter FLAMINEO

Flam. [*Aside.*] How dares this banished count return to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchased! I have heard
The deceased duchess gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
I' th' train of the young prince. There's somewhat in't:
Physicians, that cure poisons, still do work
With counter-poisons.

Mar. Mark this strange encounter.

Flam. The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the stigmatic wrinkles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another.

Lod. I do thank thee,

And I do wish ingeniously for thy sake,
The dog-days all year long.
Flam. How croaks the raven?
Is our good duchess dead?
Lod. Dead.
Flam. O fate!
Misfortune comes like the coroner's business
Huddle upon huddle.
Lod. Shalt thou and I join housekeeping?
Flam. Yes, content:
Let's be unsociably sociable.
Lod. Sit some three days together, and discourse?
Flam. Only with making faces; lie in our clothes.
Lod. With faggots for our pillows.
Flam. And be lousy.
Lod. In taffeta linings, that's genteel melancholy;
Sleep all day.
Flam. Yes; and, like your melancholic hare,[n]
Feed after midnight.
We are observed: see how yon couple grieve.[n]
Lod. What a strange creature is a laughing fool!
As if man were created to no use
But only to show his teeth.
Flam. I'll tell thee what,
It would do well instead of looking-glasses,
To set one's face each morning by a saucer
Of a witch's congealed blood.[n]
Lod. Precious rogue!
We'll never part.
Flam. Never, till the beggary of courtiers,
The discontent of churchmen, want of soldiers,
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
Worse than strappadoed, on the lowest felly
Of fortune's wheel, be taught, in our two lives,
To scorn that world which life of means deprives.

Enter ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO

Ant. My lord, I bring good news. The Pope, on's death-bed,
At th' earnest suit of the great duke of Florence,
Hath signed your pardon, and restored unto you —
Lod. I thank you for your news. Look up again,
Flamineo, see my pardon.
Flam. Why do you laugh?
There was no such condition in our covenant.
Lod. Why?
Flam. You shall not seem a happier man than I:
You know our vow, sir; if you will be merry,
Do it i' th' like posture, as if some great man
Sate while his enemy were executed:
Though it be very lechery unto thee,
Do't with a crabbèd politician's face.
Lod. Your sister is a damnable whore.
Flam. Ha!
Lod. Look you, I spake that laughing.
Flam. Dost ever think to speak again?
Lod. Do you hear?
Wilt sell me forty ounces of her blood
To water a mandrake?
Flam. Poor lord, you did vow
To live a lousy creature.
Lod. Yes.
Flam. Like one
That had for ever forfeited the daylight,
By being in debt.
Lod. Ha, ha!
Flam. I do not greatly wonder you do break,[n]
Your lordship learned't long since. But I'll tell you —
Lod. What?
Flam. And't shall stick by you —
Lod. I long for it.
Flam. This laughter scurvily becomes your face:

If you will not be melancholy, be angry. [*Strikes him.*
See, now I laugh, too.
Mar. You are to blame: I'll force you hence.
Lod. Unhand me.
[*Exeunt* MARCELLO *and* FLAMINEO.
That e'er I should be forced to right myself,
Upon a pander!
Ant. My lord!
Lod. H' had been as good met with his fist a thunderbolt.
Gas. How this shows!
Lod. Ud'sdeath![n] how did my sword miss him?
These rogues that are most weary of their lives
Still scape the greatest dangers.
A pox upon him! all his reputation,
Nay, all the goodness of his family,
Is not worth half this earthquake:
I learned it of no fencer to shake thus:
Come, I'll forget him, and go drink some wine. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO

Mont. Come, come, my lord, untie your folded thoughts,
And let them dangle loose, as a bride's hair.[n]
Your sister's poisoned.
Fran. Far be it from my thoughts
To seek revenge.
Mont. What, are you turned all marble?
Fran. Shall I defy him, and impose a war,
Most burdensome on my poor subjects' necks,
Which at my will I have not power to end?
You know for all the murders, rapes, and thefts,
Committed in the horrid lust of war,
He that unjustly caused it first proceed,
Shall find it in his grave, and in his seed.

Mont. That's not the course I'd wish you; pray observe me.
We see that undermining more prevails
Than doth the cannon. Bear your wrongs concealed,
And, patient as the tortoise, let this camel
Stalk o'er your back unbruised: sleep with the lion,
And let this brood of secure foolish mice
Play with your nostrils, till the time be ripe
For th' bloody audit, and the fatal gripe:
Aim like a cunning fowler, close one eye,
That you the better may your game espy.
Fran. Free me, my innocence, from treacherous acts!
I know there's thunder yonder; and I'll stand,
Like a safe valley, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain: since I know
Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foul work is found, and in it dies.
To pass away these thoughts, my honoured lord,
It is reported you possess a book,
Wherein you have quoted, by intelligence,
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city.
Mont. Sir, I do;
And some there are which call it my black book.
Well may the title hold; for though it teach not
The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk
The names of many devils.
Fran. Pray let's see it.
Mont. I'll fetch it to your lordship. [*Exit.*
Fran. Monticelso,
I will not trust thee, but in all my plots
I'll rest as jealous as a town besieged.
Thou canst not reach what I intend to act:
Your flax soon kindles, soon is out again,
But gold slow heats, and long will hot remain.

Enter MONTICELSO, *presents* FRANCISCO *with a book*

Mont. 'Tis here, my lord.
Fran. First, your intelligencers, pray let's see.
Mont. Their number rises strangely, and some of them
You'd take for honest men. Next are panders:
These are your pirates; and these following leaves
For base rogues that undo young gentlemen,
By taking up commodities;[n] for politic bankrupts;
For fellows that are bawds to their own wives,
Only to put off horses, and slight jewels,
Clocks, defaced plate, and such commodities,
At birth of their first children.
Fran. Are there such?
Mont. These are for impudent bawds,
That go in men's apparel; for usurers
That share with scriveners for their good reportage
For lawyers that will antedate their writs:
And some divines you might find folded there,
But that I slip them o'er for conscience' sake.
Here is a general catalogue of knaves:
A man might study all the prisons o'er,
Yet never attain this knowledge.
Fran. Murderers?
Fold down the leaf, I pray;
Good my lord, let me borrow this strange doctrine.
Mont. Pray, use't, my lord.
Fran. I do assure your lordship,
You are a worthy member of the state,
And have done infinite good in your discovery
Of these offenders.
Mont. Somewhat, sir.
Fran. O God!
Better than tribute of wolves paid in England;
'Twill hang their skins o' th' hedge.
Mont. I must make bold
To leave your lordship.

Fran. Dearly, sir, I thank you:
If any ask for me at court, report
You have left me in the company of knaves.
[*Exit* MONTICELSO.
I gather now by this,[n] some cunning fellow
That's my lord's officer, and that lately skipped
From a clerk's desk up to a justice' chair,
Hath made this knavish summons, and intends,
As th' Irish rebels wont were to sell heads,
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens:
Your poor rogues pay for't which have not the means
To present bribe in fist; the rest o' th' band
Are razed out of the knaves' record; or else
My lord he winks at them with easy will;
His man grows rich, the knaves are the knaves still.
But to the use I'll make of it; it shall serve
To point me out a list of murderers,
Agents for any villainy. Did I want
Ten leash of courtesans, it would furnish me;
Nay, laundress, three armies.[n] That so little paper
Should be th' undoing of so many men!
'Tis not so big as twenty declarations.
See the corrupted use some make of books:
Divinity,[n] wrested by some factious blood,
Draws swords, swells battles, and o'erthrows all good.
To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sister's face:
Call for her picture? no, I'll close mine eyes,
And in a melancholic thought I'll frame

Enter ISABELLA'S Ghost

Her figure fore me. Now I ha't — how strong
Imagination works! how she can frame
Things which are not! methinks she stands afore me,
And by the quick idea of my mind,
Were my skill pregnant, I could draw her picture.

Thought, as a subtle juggler, makes us deem
Things supernatural, which yet have cause
Common as sickness. 'Tis my melancholy.
How cam'st thou by thy death? — how idle am I
To question mine own idleness! — did ever
Man dream awake till now? — remove this object;
Out of my brain with't: what have I to do
With tombs, or death-beds, funerals, or tears,
That have to meditate upon revenge? [*Exit* Ghost.
So, now 'tis ended, like an old wife's story.
Statesmen think often they see stranger sights
Than madmen. Come, to this weighty business.
My tragedy must have some idle mirth in't,
Else it will never pass. I am in love,
In love with Corombona; and my suit
Thus halts to her in verse. — [*He writes.*
I have done it rarely: O the fate of princes!
I am so used to frequent flattery,
That, being alone, I now flatter myself:
But it will serve; 'tis sealed. Bear this

Enter Servant

To the house of convertites, and watch your leisure
To give it to the hands of Corombona,
Or to the matron, when some followers
Of Brachiano may be by. Away! [*Exit* Servant.
He that deals all by strength, his wit is shallow;
When a man's head goes through, each limb will follow.
The engine for my business, bold count Lodowick;
'Tis gold must such an instrument procure,
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Brachiano, I am now fit for thy encounter:
Like the wild Irish, I'll ne'er think thee dead
Till I can play at football with thy head.
Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.[n] [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH

SCENE I[n]

Enter the Matron, *and* FLAMINEO

Matron. Should it be known the duke hath such recourse
To your imprisoned sister, I were like
T' incur much damage by it.
Flam. Not a scruple.
The Pope lies on his death-bed, and their heads
Are troubled now with other business
Than guarding of a lady.

Enter Servant

Servant. [*Aside.*] Yonder's Flamineo in conference
With the matrona. — Let me speak with you:
I would entreat you to deliver for me
This letter to the fair Vittoria.
Matron. I shall, sir.
Servant. With all care and secrecy;
Hereafter you shall know me, and receive
Thanks for this courtesy. [*Exit.*
Flam. How now? what's that?
Matron. A letter.
Flam. To my sister? I'll see't delivered.

Enter BRACHIANO

Brach. What's that you read, Flamineo?
Flam. Look.

Brach. Ha!
"To the most unfortunate, his best respected
Vittoria." — Who was the messenger?
Flam. I know not.
Brach. No! who sent it?
Flam. Ud'sfoot! you speak, as if a man
Should know what fowl is coffined in a baked meat[n]
Afore you cut it up.
Brach. I'll open't, were't her heart. What's here subscribed!
Florence! this juggling is gross and palpable.
I have found out the conveyance. Read it, read it.
Flam. "Your tears I'll turn to triumphs, be but mine;
Your prop is fallen: I pity, that a vine,
Which princes heretofore have longed to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither."
(Wine, i' faith, my lord, with lees would serve his turn.)
"Your sad imprisonment I'll soon uncharm,
And with a princely uncontrollèd arm
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver hair."
(A halter on his strange equivocation!)
"Nor for my years return me the sad willow,
Who prefer blossoms before fruit that's mellow?"
(Rotten, on my knowledge, with lying too long i' th' bed-straw.)
"And all the lines of age this line convinces;
The gods never wax old, no more do princes."
A pox on't, tear it; let's have no more atheists,
For God's sake.
Brach. Ud'sdeath! I'll cut her into atomies.
And let th' irregular north wind sweep her up,
And blow her int' his nostrils: where's this whore?
Flam. What? what do you call her?
Brach. O, I could be mad!
Prevent the cursed disease she'll bring me to,
And tear my hair off. Where's this changeable stuff?

Flam. O'er head and ears in water,[n] I assure you;
She is not for your wearing.
Brach. No, you pander?
Flam. What, me, my lord? am I your dog?
Brach. A bloodhound: do you brave, do you stand me?
Flam. Stand you! let those that have diseases run;
I need no plasters.
Brach. Would you be kicked?
Flam. Would you have your neck broke?
I tell you, duke, I am not in Russia;[n]
My shins must be kept whole.
Brach. Do you know me?
Flam. O my lord, methodically!
As in this world there are degrees of evils,
So in this world there are degrees of devils.
You're a great duke, I your poor secretary.
I do look now for a Spanish fig, or an Italian sallet,[n] daily.
Brach. Pander, ply your convoy,[n] and leave your prating.
Flam. All your kindness to me, is like that miserable courtesy of Polyphemus to Ulysses; you reserve me to be devoured last: you would dig turfs out of my grave to feed your larks; that would be music to you. Come, I'll lead you to her.
Brach. Do you face me?
Flam. O, sir, I would not go before a politic enemy with my back towards him, though there were behind me a whirlpool. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter VITTORIA, *to* BRACHIANO *and* FLAMINEO

Brach. Can you read, mistress? look upon that letter:
There are no characters, nor hieroglyphics.

You need no comment; I am grown your receiver.
God's precious! you shall be a brave great lady,
A stately and advanced whore.
Vit. Say, sir?
Brach. Come, come, let's see your cabinet, discover
Your treasury of love-letters. Death and furies!
I'll see them all.
Vit. Sir, upon my soul,
I have not any. Whence was this directed?
Brach. Confusion on your politic ignorance![n]
You are reclaimed, are you? I'll give you the bells,[n]
And let you fly to the devil.
Flam. Ware hawk, my lord.
Vit. Florence! this is some treacherous plot, my lord;
To me he ne'er was lovely, I protest,
So much as in my sleep.
Brach. Right! they are plots.
Your beauty! O ten thousand curses on't!
How long have I beheld the devil in crystal![n]
Thou hast led me, like an heathen sacrifice,
With music, and with fatal yokes of flowers,
To my eternal ruin. Woman to man
Is either a god, or a wolf.
Vit. My lord —
Brac. Away!
We'll be as differing as two adamants,
The one shall shun the other. What! dost weep?
Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,
Ye'd furnish all the Irish funerals
With howling past wild Irish.
Flam. Fie, my lord!
Brach. That hand, that cursèd hand, which I have wearied
With doting kisses! — O my sweetest duchess,
How lovely art thou now! — My loose thoughts
Scatter like quicksilver: I was bewitched;
For all the world speaks ill of thee.

Vit. No matter;
I'll live so now, I'll make that world recant,
And change her speeches. You did name your duchess.
Brach. Whose death God pardon!
Vit. Whose death God revenge
On thee, most godless duke!
Flam. Now for ten whirlwinds.
Vit. What have I gained by thee, but infamy?
Thou hast stained the spotless honour of my house,
And frighted thence noble society:
Like those, which sick o' th' palsy, and retain
Ill-scenting foxes 'bout them,[n] are still shunned
By those of choicer nostrils. What do you call this house?
Is this your palace? did not the judge style it
A house of penitent whores? who sent me to it?
Who hath the honour to advance Vittoria
To this incontinent college? is't not you?
Is't not your high preferment? go, go, brag
How many ladies you have undone like me.
Fare you well, sir; let me hear no more of you!
I had a limb corrupted to an ulcer,
But I have cut it off; and now I'll go
Weeping to heaven on crutches. For your gifts,
I will return them all, and I do wish
That I could make you full executor
To all my sins. O that I could toss myself
Into a grave as quickly! for all thou art worth
I'll not shed one tear more — I'll burst first.
[*She throws herself upon a bed.*
Brach. I have drunk Lethe: Vittoria!
My dearest happiness! Vittoria!
What do you ail, my love? why do you weep?
Vit. Yes, I now weep poniards, do you see?
Brach. Are not those matchless eyes mine?
Vit. I had rather
They were not matchless.
Brach. Is not this lip mine?

Vit. Yes; thus to bite it off, rather than give it thee.
Flam. Turn to my lord, good sister.
Vit. Hence, you pander!
Flam. Pander! am I the author of your sin?
Vit. Yes; he's a base thief that a thief lets in.
Flam. We're blown up, my lord.
Brach. Wilt thou hear me?
Once to be jealous of thee, is t'express
That I will love thee everlastingly,
And never more be jealous.
Vit. O thou fool,
Whose greatness hath by much o'ergrown thy wit!
What dar'st thou do, that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to be still thy whore? for that,
In the sea's bottom sooner thou shalt make
A bonfire.
Flam. O, no oaths, for God's sake!
Brach. Will you hear me?
Vit. Never.
Flam. What a damned impostume is a woman's will!
Can nothing break it? Fie, fie, my lord,
Women are caught as you take tortoises,
She must be turned on her back. — [*Aside.*] Sister, by this hand
I am on your side — Come, come, you have wronged her:
What a strange credulous man were you, my lord,
To think the duke of Florence would love her!
Will any mercer take another's ware
When once 'tis towsed and sullied? — And yet, sister,
How scurvily this forwardness becomes you!
Young leverets stand not long, and women's anger
Should, like their flight, procure a little sport;
A full cry for a quarter of an hour,
And then be put to th' dead quat.
Brach. Shall these eyes,
Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,
Be now put out?

Flam. No cruel landlady i' th' world,
Which lends forth groats to broom-men, and takes use for them,
Would do't.
Hand her, my lord, and kiss her: be not like
A ferret, to let go your hold with blowing.
Brach. Let us renew right hands.
Vit. Hence!
Brach. Never shall rage, or the forgetful wine,
Make me commit like fault.
Flam. Now you are i' th' way on't, follow't hard.
Brach. Be thou at peace with me, let all the world
Threaten the cannon.
Flam. Mark his penitence;
Best natures do commit the grossest faults,
When they're given o'er to jealousy, as best wine,
Dying, makes strongest vinegar. I'll tell you:
The sea's more rough and raging than calm rivers,
But not so sweet, nor wholesome. A quiet woman
Is a still water under a great bridge;
A man may shoot her safely.
Vit. O ye dissembling men!
Flam. We sucked that, sister,
From women's breasts, in our first infancy.
Vit. To add misery to misery!
Brach. Sweetest!
Vit. Am I not low enough?
Aye, aye, your good heart gathers like a snowball,
Now your affection's cold.
Flam. Ud'sfoot, it shall melt
To a heart again, or all the wine in Rome
Shall run o' th' lees for't.
Vit. Your dog or hawk should be rewarded better
Than I have been. I'll speak not one word more.
Flam. Stop her mouth with a sweet kiss, my lord. So,
Now the tide's turned, the vessel's come about.
He's a sweet armful. O, we curl-haired men

Are still most kind to women! This is well.
Brach. That you should chide thus!
Flam. O, sir, your little chimneys
Do ever cast most smoke! I sweat for you.
Couple together with as deep a silence,
As did the Grecians in their wooden horse.
My lord, supply your promises with deeds;
You know that painted meat no hunger feeds.
Brach. Stay, ingrateful Rome —
Flam. Rome! it deserves
To be called Barbary, for our villainous usage.
Brach. Soft; the same project which the duke of Florence,
(Whether in love or gullery I know not),
Laid down for her escape, will I pursue.
Flam. And no time fitter than this night, my lord.
The Pope being dead, and all the cardinals entered
The conclave for th' electing a new Pope;
The city in a great confusion;
We may attire her in a page's suit,
Lay her post-horse, take shipping, and amain
For Padua.
Brach. I'll instantly steal forth the prince Giovanni,
And make for Padua. You two with your old mother,
And young Marcello that attends on Florence,
If you can work him to it, follow me:
I will advance you all; for you, Vittoria,
Think of a duchess' title.
Flam. Lo you, sister!
Stay, my lord; I'll tell you a tale. The crocodile, which lives in the river Nilus, hath a worm breeds i' th' teeth of't, which puts it to extreme anguish: a little bird, no bigger than a wren, is barber-surgeon to this crocodile; flies into the jaws of't, picks out the worm, and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease, but ingrateful to her that did it, that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chaps,

intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence. But nature, loathing such ingratitude, hath armed this bird with a quill or prick on the head, top o' th' which wounds the crocodile i' th' mouth, forceth her open her bloody prison, and away flies the pretty tooth-picker from her cruel patient.

Brach. Your application is, I have not rewarded
The service you have done me.

Flam. No, my lord.
You, sister, are the crocodile: you are blemished in your fame, my lord cures it; and though the comparison hold not in every particle, yet observe, remember, what good the bird with the prick i' th' head hath done you, and scorn ingratitude.

[*Aside.*] It may appear to some ridiculous
Thus to talk knave and madman, and sometimes
Come in with a dried sentence, stuffed with sage:
But this allows my varying of shapes;
Knaves do grow great by being great men's apes.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, GASPARO, *and six* Ambassadors

Fran. So, my lord, I commend your diligence.
Guard well the conclave; and, as the order is,
Let none have conference with the cardinals.

Lod. I shall, my lord. Room for the ambassadors!

Gasp. They're wondrous brave to-day: why do they wear
These several habits?

Lod. O, sir, they're knights
Of several orders:
That lord i' th' black cloak, with the silver cross,
Is Knight of Rhodes; the next, Knight of St. Michael;
That, of the Golden Fleece; the Frenchman, there,

Knight of the Holy Ghost; my lord of Savoy,
Knight of th' Annunciation; the Englishman
Is Knight of th' honoured Garter, dedicated
Unto their Saint, St. George. I could describe to you
Their several institutions, with the laws
Annexed to their orders; but that time
Permits not such discovery.
Fran. Where's count Lodowick?
Lod. Here, my lord.
Fran. 'Tis o' th' point of dinner time
Marshal the cardinals' service.
Lod. Sir, I shall.

Enter Servants, *with several dishes covered*

Stand, let me search your dish. Who's this for?
Servant. For my lord cardinal Monticelso.
Lod. Whose this?
Servant. For my lord cardinal of Bourbon
Fr. Amb. Why doth he search the dishes? to observe
What meat is dressed?
Eng. Amb. No, sir, but to prevent
Lest any letters should be conveyed in,
To bribe or to solicit the advancement
Of any cardinal. When first they enter,
'Tis lawful for the ambassadors of princes
To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their prince affecteth best;
But after, till a general election,
No man may speak with them.
Lod. You that attend on the lord cardinals,
Open the window, and receive their viands.
Cardinal [*from the window*]. You must return the
service: the lord cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope;
They have given o'er scrutiny, and are fallen
To admiration.[n]

Lod. Away, away!

Fran. I'll lay a thousand ducats you hear news
[*Enter* Cardinal ARRAGON *on the terrace.*
Of a Pope presently. Hark; sure he's elected:
Behold, my lord of Arragon appears
On the church battlements.

Arragon. Denuntio vobis gaudium magnum: Reverendissimus cardinalis Lorenzo de Monticelso electus est in sedem apostolicam, et elegit sibi nomen Paulum Quartum.[n]

Omnes. Vivat sanctus pater Paulus Quartus!

Enter Servant

Servant. Vittoria, my lord —

Fran. Well, what of her?

Servant. Is fled the city.

Fran. Ha!

Servant. With duke Brachiano.

Fran. Fled! where's the prince Giovanni?

Servant. Gone with his father.

Fran. Let the matrona of the convertites
Be apprehended. Fled? O damnable! [*Exit* Servant.
How fortunate are my wishes! why, t'was this
I only laboured: I did send the letter
T'instruct him what to do. Thy fame, fond duke,
I first have poisoned; directed thee the way
To marry a whore; what can be worse? this follows:
The hand must act to drown the passionate tongue,
I scorn to wear a sword and prate of wrong.

Enter MONTICELSO *in state*

Mont. Concedimus vobis apostolicam benedictionem, et remissionem peccatorum.[n]
My lord reports Vittoria Corombona
Is stol'n from forth the house of convertites
By Brachiano, and they're fled the city.
Now, though this be the first day of our seat,
We cannot better please the divine power,

Than to sequester from the holy church
These cursèd persons. Make it therefore known,
We do denounce excommunication
Against them both: all that are theirs in Rome
We likewise banish. Set on. [*Exeunt.*
Fran. Come, dear Lodovico;
You have ta'en the sacrament to prosecute
Th' intended murder.
Lod. With all constancy.
But, sir, I wonder you'll engage yourself
In person, being a great prince.
Fran. Divert me not.
Most of his court are of my faction,
And some are of my council. Noble friend,
Our danger shall be like in this design:
Give leave part of the glory may be mine.
[*Exit* FRANCISCO.

Enter MONTICELSO

Mont. Why did the duke of Florence with such care
Labour your pardon? say.
Lod. Italian beggars will resolve you that,
Who, begging of an alms, bid those they beg of
Do good for their own sakes; or't may be,
He spreads his bounty with a sowing hand,
Like kings, who many times give out of measure,
Not for desert so much, as for their pleasure.
Mont. I know you're cunning. Come, what devil was that
That you were raising?
Lod. Devil, my lord?
Mont. I ask you,
How doth the duke employ you, that his bonnet
Fell with such compliment unto his knee,
When he departed from you?
Lod. Why, my lord,
He told me of a resty Barbary horse

Which he would fain have brought to the career,
The sault, and the ring galliard:[n] now, my lord,
I have a rare French rider.
Mont. Take you heed,
Lest the jade break your neck. Do you put me off
With your wild horse-tricks? Sirrah, you do lie.
O, thou'rt a foul black cloud, and thou dost threat
A violent storm!
Lod. Storms are i' th' air, my lord;
I am too low to storm.
Mont. Wretched creature!
I know that thou art fashioned for all ill,
Like dogs, that once get blood, they'll ever kill.
About some murder, was't not?
Lod. I'll not tell you:
And yet I care not greatly if I do;
Marry, with this preparation. Holy father,
I come not to you as an intelligencer,
But as a penitent sinner: what I utter
Is in confession merely; which, you know,
Must never be revealed.
Mont. You have o'erta'en me.
Lod. Sir, I did love Brachiano's duchess dearly,
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though she ne'er knew on't. She was poisoned;
Upon my soul she was: for which I have sworn
T' avenge her murder.
Mont. To the duke of Florence?
Lod. To him I have.
Mont. Miserable creature!
If thou persist in this, 'tis damnable.
Dost thou imagine, thou canst slide on blood,
And not be tainted with a shameful fall?
Or, like the black and melancholic yew-tree,
Dost think to root thyself in dead men's graves,
And yet to prosper? Instruction to thee
Comes like sweet showers to o'er-hardened ground;

They wet, but pierce not deep. And so I leave thee,
With all the furies hanging 'bout thy neck,
Till by thy penitence thou remove this evil,
In conjuring from thy breast that cruel devil. [*Exit.*
Lod. I'll give it o'er; he says 'tis damnable:
Besides I did expect his suffrage,
By reason of Camillo's death.

Enter Servant *and* FRANCISCO

Fran. Do you know that count?
Servant. Yes, my lord.
Fran. Bear him these thousand ducats to his lodging;
Tell him the Pope hath sent them. Happily
That will confirm more than all the rest. [*Exit.*
Servant. Sir —
Lod. To me, sir?
Servant. His Holiness hath sent you a thousand crowns,
And wills you, if you travel, to make him
Your patron for intelligence.
Lod. His creature ever to be commanded. —
[*Exit* Servant.
Why now 'tis come about. He railed upon me;
And yet these crowns were told out, and laid ready,
Before he knew my voyage. O the art,
The modest form of greatness! that do sit,
Like brides at wedding-dinners, with their looks turned
From the least wanton jest, their puling stomach
Sick of the modesty, when their thoughts are loose,
Even acting of those hot and lustful sports
Are to ensue about midnight: such his cunning!
He sounds my depth thus with a golden plummet.
I am doubly armed now. Now to th' act of blood.
There's but three furies found in spacious hell,
But in a great man's breast three thousand dwell. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH

SCENE I[n]

A passage over the stage of BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, HORTENSIO, VITTORIA, CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and others:* FLAMINEO *and* HORTENSIO *remain*

Flam. In all the weary minutes of my life,
Day ne'er broke up till now. This marriage
Confirms me happy.
Hort. 'Tis a good assurance.
Saw you not yet the Moor that's come to court?
Flam. Yes, and conferred with him i' th' duke's closet.
I have not seen a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talked with man better experienced
In state affairs, or rudiments of war.
He hath, by report, served the Venetian
In Candy these twice seven years, and been chief
In many a bold design.
Hort. What are those two
That bear him company?
Flam. Two noblemen of Hungary, that, living in the emperor's service as commanders, eight years since, contrary to the expectation of all the court, entered into religion, into the strict order of Capuchins; but, being not well settled in their undertaking, they left their order, and returned to court; for which, being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ, went to Malta, were there knighted, and in their return back, at this great solemnity, they are resolved for ever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchins in Padua.
Hort. 'Tis strange.

Flam. One thing makes it so: they have vowed for ever to wear, next their bare bodies, those coats of mail they served in.

Hort. Hard penance! Is the Moor a Christian?

Flam. He is.

Hort. Why proffers he his service to our duke?

Flam. Because he understands there's like to grow
Some wars between us and the duke of Florence,
In which he hopes employment.
I never saw one in a stern bold look
Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing, or more deep contempt
Of our slight airy courtiers. He talks
As if he had travelled all the princes' courts
Of Christendom: in all things strives t'express,
That all, that should dispute with him, may know,
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But looked to near, have neither heat nor light.
The duke!

Enter BRACHIANO, FRANCISCO *disguised like* MULINASSAR, LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *disguised as* CARLO *and* PETTRO, *bearing their swords, their helmets down,* ANTONELLI, FARNESE.

Brach. You are nobly welcome. We have heard at full
Your honourable service 'gainst the Turk.
To you, brave Mulinassar, we assign
A competent pension: and are inly sorry,
The vows of those two worthy gentlemen
Make them incapable of our proffered bounty.
Your wish is, you may leave your warlike swords
For monuments in our chapel: I accept it,
As a great honour done me, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our duchess' revels.[n]
Only one thing, at the last vanity
You e'er shall view, deny me not to stay

To see a barriers prepared to-night:
You shall have private standings. It hath pleased
The great ambassadors of several princes,
In their return from Rome to their own countries,
To grace our marriage, and to honour me
With such a kind of sport.
Fran. I shall persuade them
To stay, my lord.
Brach. Set on there to the presence.
[*Exeunt* BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, *and* HORTENSIO.
Lod. Noble my lord, most fortunately welcome;
[*The* Conspirators *here embrace.*
You have our vows, sealed with the sacrament,
To second your attempts.
Gas. And all things ready;
He could not have invented his own ruin
(Had he despaired) with more propriety.
Lod. You would not take my way.
Fran. 'Tis better ordered.
Lod. T' have poisoned his prayer-book, or a pair of beads,[n]
The pummel of his saddle, his looking-glass,
Or th' handle of his racket, — O that, that!
That while he had been bandying at tennis;
He might have sworn himself to hell, and strook
His soul into the hazard! O my lord,
I would have our plot be ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example,
Rather than borrow example.
Fran. There's no way
More speeding than this thought on.
Lod. On, then.
Fran. And yet methinks that this revenge is poor,
Because it steals upon him like a thief:
To have ta'en him by the casque in a pitched field,
Led him to Florence —
Lod. It had been rare: and there

Have crowned him with a wreath of stinking garlic;
T' have shown the sharpness of his government,
And rankness of his lust. Flamineo comes.
[*Exeunt* LODOVICO, ANTONELLI, *and* GASPARO.

Enter FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, *and* ZANCHE

Mar. Why doth this devil haunt you, say?
Flam. I know not:
For by this light, I do not conjure for her.
'Tis not so great a cunning as men think,
To raise the devil; for here's one up already;
The greatest cunning were to lay him down.
Mar. She is your shame.
Flam. I prithee pardon her.
In faith, you see, women are like to burs,
Where their affection throws them, there they'll stick.
Zan. That is my countryman,[n] a goodly person;
When he's at leisure, I'll discourse with him
In our own language.
Flam. I beseech you do. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
How is't, brave soldier? O that I had seen
Some of your iron days! I pray relate
Some of your service to us.
Fran. 'Tis a ridiculous thing for a man to be his own chronicle: I did never wash my mouth with mine own praise, for fear of getting a stinking breath.
Mar. You're too stoical. The duke will expect other discourse from you.
Fran. I shall never flatter him: I have studied man too much to do that. What difference is between the duke and I? no more than between two bricks, all made of one clay: only't may be one is placed on the top of a turret, the other in the bottom of a well, by mere chance. If I were placed as high as the duke, I should stick as fast, make as fair a show, and bear out weather equally.
Flam. [*Aside.*] If this soldier had a patent to beg in churches, then he would tell them stories.

Mar. I have been a soldier, too.

Fran. How have you thrived?

Mar. Faith, poorly.

Fran. That's the misery of peace: only outsides are then respected. As ships seem very great upon the river, which show very little upon the seas, so some men i' th' court seem Colossuses in a chamber, who, if they came into the field, would appear pitiful pigmies.

Flam. Give me a fair room yet hung with arras, and some great cardinal to lug me by th' ears, as his endeared minion.

Fran. And thou mayest do the devil knows what villainy.

Flam. And safely.

Fran. Right: you shall see in the country, in harvest-time, pigeons, though they destroy never so much corn, the farmer dare not present the fowling-piece to them: why? because they belong to the lord of the manor; whilst your poor sparrows, that belong to the lord of heaven, they go to the pot for't.

Flam. I will now give you some politic instructions. The duke says he will give you pension; that's but bare promise; get it under his hand. For I have known men that have come from serving against the Turk, for three or four months they have had pension to buy them new wooden legs, and fresh plasters; but after, 'twas not to be had. And this miserable courtesy shows as if a tormentor should give hot cordial drinks to one three quarters dead o' th' rack, only to fetch the miserable soul again to endure more dog-days.

[*Exit* FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS.

Enter HORTENSIO, *a* Young Lord, ZANCHE, *and two more*

How now, gallants? what, are they ready for the barriers?

Young Lord. Yes: the lords are putting on their armour.

Hort. What's he?

Flam. A new upstart; one that swears like a falconer, and will lie in the duke's ear day by day, like a maker of almanacs; and yet I knew him, since he came to th' court, smell worse of sweat than an under tennis-court keeper.

Hort. Look you, yonder's your sweet mistress.

Flam. Thou art my sworn brother: I'll tell thee, I do love that Moor, that witch, very constrainedly. She knows some of my villainy. I do love her just as a man holds a wolf by the ears; but for fear of her turning upon me, and pulling out my throat, I would let her go to the devil.

Hort. I hear she claims marriage of thee.

Flam. 'Faith, I made to her some such dark promise; and, in seeking to fly from't, I run on, like a frighted dog with a bottle at's tail, that fain would bite it off, and yet dares not look behind him. Now, my precious gipsy.

Zan. Aye, your love to me rather cools than heats.

Flam. Marry, I am the sounder lover; we have many wenches about the town heat too fast.

Hort. What do you think of these perfumed gallants, then?

Flam. Their satin cannot save them: I am confident They have a certain spice of the disease;
For they that sleep with dogs shall rise with fleas.

Zan. Believe it, a little painting and gay clothes make you love me.

Flam. How! love a lady for painting or gay apparel? I'll unkennel one example more for thee. Æsop had a foolish dog that let go the flesh to catch the shadow; I would have courtiers be better divers.

Zan. You remember your oaths?

Flam. Lovers' oaths are like mariners' prayers, uttered in extremity; but when the tempest is o'er, and that the vessel leaves tumbling, they fall from protesting to drinking.[n] And yet, amongst gentlemen, pro-

testing and drinking go together, and agree as well as shoemakers and Westphalia bacon: they are both drawers on; for drink draws on protestation, and protestation draws on more drink. Is not this discourse better now than the morality of your sunburnt gentleman?

Enter CORNELIA

Cor. Is this your perch, you haggard? fly to th' stews.
[*Striking* ZANCHE.
Flam. You should be clapped by th' heels[n] now: strike i' th' court! [*Exit* CORNELIA.
Zan. She's good for nothing, but to make her maids
Catch cold a-nights: they dare not use a bedstaff,
For fear of her light fingers.
Mar. You're a strumpet,
An impudent one.
Flam. Why do you kick her, say?
Do you think that she's like a walnut-tree?
Must she be cudgelled ere she bear good fruit?
Mar. She brags that you shall marry her.
Flam. What then?
Mar. I had rather she were pitched upon a stake,
In some new-seeded garden, to affright
Her fellow crows thence.
Flam. You're a boy, a fool.
Be guardian to your hound; I am of age.
Mar. If I take her near you, I'll cut her throat.
Flam. With a fan of feathers?
Mar. And, for you, I'll whip
This folly from you.
Flam. Are you choleric?
I'll purge't with rhubarb.
Hort. O, your brother!
Flam. Hang him,
He wrongs me most, that ought t'offend me least:
I do suspect my mother played foul play,

When she conceived thee.

Mar. Now, by all my hopes,
Like the two slaughtered sons of Œdipus,
The very flames of our affection
Shall turn two ways. Those words I'll make thee answer
With thy heart blood.

Flam. Do, like the geese in the progress;
You know where you shall find me.

Mar. Very good. [*Exit* FLAMINEO.
And thou be'st a noble friend, bear him my sword,
And bid him fit the length on't.

Young Lord. Sir, I shall.
[*Exeunt all but* ZANCHE.

Zan. He comes. Hence petty thought of my disgrace!

Enter FRANCISCO

I ne'er loved my complexion till now,
'Cause I may boldly say, without a blush,
I love you.

Fran. Your love is untimely sown; there's a spring at Michaelmas, but 'tis but a faint one: I am sunk in years, and I have vowed never to marry.

Zan. Alas! poor maids get more lovers than husbands: yet you may mistake my wealth. For, as when ambassadors are sent to congratulate princes, there's commonly sent along with them a rich present, so that, though the prince like not the ambassador's person, nor words, yet he likes well of the presentment; so I may come to you in the same manner, and be better loved for my dowry than my virtue.

Fran. I'll think on the motion.

Zan. Do; I'll now detain you no longer. At your better leisure, I'll tell you things shall startle your blood:
Nor blame me that this passion I reveal;
Lovers die inward that their flames conceal. [*Exit.*

Fran. Of all intelligence this may prove the best:
Sure I shall draw strange fowl from this foul nest. [*Exit.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter MARCELLO *and* CORNELIA

Cor. I hear a whispering all about the court,
You are to fight: who is your opposite?
What is the quarrel?
Mar. 'Tis an idle rumour.
Cor. Will you dissemble? sure you do not well
To fright me thus: you never look thus pale,
But when you are most angry. I do charge you,
Upon my blessing — nay, I'll call the duke,
And he shall school you.
Mar. Publish not a fear,
Which would convert to laughter: 'tis not so.
Was not this crucifix my father's?[n]
Cor. Yes.
Mar. I have heard you say, giving my brother suck,
He took the crucifix between his hands,

Enter FLAMINEO

And broke a limb off.
Cor. Yes, but 'tis mended.
Flam. I have brought your weapon back.
[FLAMINEO *runs* MARCELLO *through.*
Cor. Ha! O my horror!
Mar. You have brought it home, indeed.
Cor. Help! O, he's murdered!
Flam. Do you turn your gall up? I'll to sanctuary,
And send a surgeon to you. [*Exit.*

Enter LODOVICO, HORTENSIO, *and* GASPARO

Hort. How! o' th' ground!
Mar. O mother, now remember what I told
Of breaking of the crucifix! Farewell.

There are some sins, which heaven doth duly punish
In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest means! Let all men know,
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot,
Whose branches spread no wider than the root. [*Dies.*

Cor. O my perpetual sorrow!

Hort. Virtuous Marcello!
He's dead. Pray leave him, lady: come, you shall.

Cor. Alas! he is not dead; he's in a trance. Why here's nobody shall get anything by his death. Let me call him again, for God's sake!

Lod. I would you were deceived.

Cor. O, you abuse me, you abuse me, you abuse me! how many have gone away thus, for lack of 'tendance! rear up's head, rear up's head! his bleeding inward will kill him.

Hort. You see he is departed.

Cor. Let me come to him; give me him as he is; if he be turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss, and you shall put us both into one coffin. Fetch a looking-glass: see if his breath will not stain it; or pull out some feathers from my pillow, and lay them to his lips. Will you lose him for a little painstaking?

Hort. Your kindest office is to pray for him.

Cor. Alas! I would not pray for him yet. He may live to lay me i' th' ground, and pray for me, if you'll let me come to him.

Enter BRACHIANO, *all armed, save the beaver, with* FLAMINEO, FRANCISCO, *and* Page

Brach. Was this your handiwork?

Flam. It was my misfortune.

Cor. He lies, he lies! he did not kill him: these have killed him, that would not let him be better looked to.

Brach. Have comfort, my grieved mother.

Cor. O you screech-owl!

Hort. Forbear, good madam.
Cor. Let me go, let me go.
[*She runs to* FLAMINEO *with her knife drawn, and coming to him lets it fall.*
The God of Heaven forgive thee! Dost not wonder
I pray for thee? I'll tell thee what's the reason
I have scarce breath to number twenty minutes;
I'd not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well:
Half of thyself lies there; and may'st thou live
To fill an hour-glass with his mouldered ashes,
To tell how thou should'st spend the time to come
In blessed repentance!
Brach. Mother, pray tell me
How came he by his death? what was the quarrel?
Cor. Indeed, my younger boy presumed too much
Upon his manhood, gave him bitter words,
Drew his sword first; and so, I know not how,
For I was out of my wits, he fell with's head
Just in my bosom.
Page. This is not true, madam.
Cor. I pray thee, peace.
One arrow's grazed[n] already; it were vain
T' lose this, for that will ne'er be found again.
Brach. Go, bear the body to Cornelia's lodging:
And we command that none acquaint our duchess
With this sad accident. For you, Flamineo,
Hark you, I will not grant your pardon.
Flam. No?
Brach. Only a lease of your life; and that shall last
But for one day: thou shalt be forced each evening
To renew it, or be hanged.
Flam. At your pleasure.
[LODOVICO *sprinkles* BRACHIANO'S *beaver with a poison.*
Your will is law now, I'll not meddle with it.
Brach. You once did brave me in your sister's lodging:
I'll now keep you in awe for't. Where's our beaver.
Fran. [*Aside.*] He calls for his destruction. Noble youth,

I pity thy sad fate! Now to the barriers.
This shall his passage to the black lake further;
The last good deed he did, he pardoned murder. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Charges and shouts. They fight at barriers; first single pairs, then three to three

Enter BRACHIANO *and* FLAMINEO, *with others*

Brach. An armourer! ud's death, an armourer!
Flam. Armourer! where's the armourer?
Brach. Tear off my beaver.
Flam. Are you hurt, my lord?
Brach. O, my brain's on fire!

Enter Armourer

The helmet is poisoned.
Armourer. My lord, upon my soul —
Brach. Away with him to torture.
There are some great ones that have hand in this,
And near about me.

Enter VITTORIA COROMBONA

Vit. O, my loved lord! poisoned!
Flam. Remove the bar. Here's unfortunate revels!
Call the physicians. A plague upon you! 10

Enter two Physicians

We have too much of your cunning here already:
I fear the ambassadors are likewise poisoned.
Brach. O, I am gone already! the infection
Flies to the brain and heart. O thou strong heart!
There's such a covenant 'tween the world and it,
They're loath to break.

Enter GIOVANNI

Giov. O my most loved father!
Brach. Remove the boy away.
Where's this good woman? Had I infinite worlds,
They were too little for thee: must I leave thee?
What say you, screech-owls, is the venom mortal?
Phys. Most deadly.
Brach. Most corrupted politic hangman,
You kill without book; but your art to save
Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.
I that have given life to offending slaves,
And wretched murderers, have I not power
To lengthen mine own a twelvemonth?
Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee
This unction is sent from the great duke of Florence.
Fran. Sir, be of comfort.
Brach. O thou soft natural death, that art joint twin
To sweetest slumber! no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure; the dull owl
Beats not against thy casement; the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion: pity winds thy corse,
Whilst horror waits on princes.
Vit. I am lost for ever.
Brach. How miserable a thing it is to die
'Mongst women howling!

Enter LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *as Capuchins*

What are those?
Flam. Franciscans:
They have brought the extreme unction.
Brach. On pain of death, let no man name death to me:
It is a word infinitely terrible.
Withdraw into our cabinet.

[*Exeunt all but* FRANCISCO *and* FLAMINEO.

Flam. To see what solitariness is about dying princes!

as heretofore they have unpeopled towns, divorced friends, and made great houses unhospitable, so now, O justice! where are their flatterers now? flatterers are but the shadows of princes' bodies; the least thick cloud makes them invisible.

Fran. There's great moan made for him.

Flam. 'Faith, for some few hours salt-water will run most plentifully in every office o' th' court; but, believe it most of them do but weep over their stepmothers' graves.

Fran. How mean you? 52

Flam. Why, they dissemble; as some men do that live within compass o' th' verge.[n]

Fran. Come, you have thrived well under him.

Flam. 'Faith, like a wolf in a woman's breast;[n] I have been fed with poultry: but, for money, understand me, I had as good a will to cozen him as e'er an officer of them all; but I had not cunning enough to do it.

Fran. What didst thou think of him? 'faith, speak freely. 61

Flam. He was a kind of statesman, that would sooner have reckoned how many cannon-bullets he had discharged against a town, to count his expense that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects he lost before it.

Fran. O, speak well of the duke!

Flam. I have done. Wilt hear some of my court-wisdom?

Enter LODOVICO

To reprehend princes is dangerous; and to over-commend some of them is palpable lying. 71

Fran. How is it with the duke?

Lod. Most deadly ill.
He's fall'n into a strange distraction:
He talks of battles and monopolies,
Levying of taxes; and from that descends
To the most brainsick language. His mind fastens

On twenty several objects, which confound
Deep sense with folly. Such a fearful end
May teach some men that bear too lofty crest,
Though they live happiest yet they die not best.
He hath conferred the whole state of the dukedom
Upon your sister, till the prince arrive
At mature age.
Flam. There's some good luck in that yet.
Fran. See, here he comes.

Enter BRACHIANO, *presented in a bed*, VITTORIA, *and others*

There's death in's face already.
Vit. O my good lord!
Brach. Away, you have abused me:
[*These speeches are several kinds of distractions and in the action should appear so.*
You have conveyed coin forth our territories,
Bought and sold offices, oppressed the poor,
And I ne'er dreamt on't. Make up your accounts,
I'll now be mine own steward.
Flam. Sir, have patience.
Brach. Indeed, I am to blame:
For did you ever hear the dusky raven
Chide blackness? or was't ever known the devil
Railed against cloven creatures?
Vit. O my lord!
Brach. Let me have some quails to supper.
Flam. Sir, you shall.
Brach. No, some fried dog-fish; your quails feed on poison.
That old dog-fox, that politician, Florence!
I'll forswear hunting, and turn dog-killer.
Rare! I'll be friends with him; for, mark you, sir, one dog
Still sets another a-barking. Peace, peace!

Yonder's a fine slave come in now.
Flam. Where?
Brach. Why, there,
In a blue bonnet, and a pair of breeches
With a great cod-piece: ha, ha, ha!
Look you, his cod-piece is stuck full of pins,
With pearls o' th' head of them. Do not you know him?
Flam. No, my lord.
Brach. Why 'tis the devil.
I know him by a great rose he wears on's shoe,
To hide his cloven foot. I'll dispute with him;
He's a rare linguist.
Vit. My lord, here's nothing.
Brach. Nothing! rare! nothing! when I want money,
Our treasury is empty, there is nothing:
I'll not be used thus.
Vit. O, lie still, my lord!
Brach. See, see Flamineo, that killed his brother,
Is dancing on the ropes there, and he carries
A money-bag in each hand, to keep him even,
For fear of breaking's neck: and there's a lawyer,
In a gown whipped with velvet,[n] stares and gapes
When the money will fall. How the rogue cuts capers!
It should have been in a halter.
'Tis there; what's she?
Flam. Vittoria, my lord.
Brach. Ha, ha, ha! her hair is sprinkled with arras-powder.
That makes her look as if she had sinned in the pastry.
What's he?
Flam. A divine, my lord.
[BRACHIANO *seems here near his end;* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *in the habit of Capuchins, present him in his bed with a crucifix and hallowed candle.*
Brach. He will be drunk; avoid him: th' argument
Is fearful, when churchmen stagger in't.[n]
Look you, six grey rats that have lost their tails

Crawl up the pillow; send for a rat-catcher:
I'll do a miracle, I'll free the court
From all foul vermin. Where's Flamineo?

Flam. I do not like that he names me so often,
Especially on's death-bed; 'tis a sign
I shall not live long. See, he's near his end.

Lod. Pray, give us leave. *Attende, domine Brachiane.*

Flam. See, see how firmly he doth fix his eye
Upon the crucifix.

Vit. O, hold it constant!
It settles his wild spirits; and so his eyes
Melt into tears.

Lod. Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo clypeo; nunc hunc clypeum hasti tuo opponas infernali.

[*By the crucifix.*

Gas. Olim hastâ valuisti in bello; nunc hanc sacram hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum.

[*By the hallowed taper.*

Lod. Attende, domine Brachiane, si nunc quoque probas ea, quæ acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in dextrum.

Gas. Esto securus, domine Brachiane; cogita, quantum habeas meritorum; denique memineris meam animam pro tuâ oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.

Lod. Si nunc quoque probas ea, quæ acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in lævum.[n]

He is departing: pray stand all apart,
And let us only whisper in his ears
Some private meditations, which our order
Permits you not to hear.

[*Here, the rest being departed,* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO *discover themselves.*

Gas. Brachiano.

Lod. Devil Brachiano, thou art damned.

Gas. Perpetually.

Lod. A slave condemned and given up to the gallows,
Is thy great lord and master.

Gas. True; for thou

Art given up to the devil.
Lod. O you slave!
You that were held the famous politician,
Whose art was poison!
Gas. And whose conscience, murder.
Lod. That would have broke your wife's neck down the stairs,
Ere she was poisoned!
Gas. That had your villainous sallets.
Lod. And fine embroidered bottles, and perfumes,
Equally mortal with a winter plague.
Gas. Now there's mercury —
Lod. And copperas —
Gas. And quicksilver —
Lod. With other devilish 'pothecary stuff,
A melting in your politic brains: dost hear?
Gas. This is count Lodovico.
Lod. This, Gasparo;
And thou shalt die like a poor rogue.
Gas. And stink
Like a dead fly-blown dog.
Lod. And be forgotten before thy funeral sermon.
Brach. Vittoria! Vittoria!
Lod. O the cursèd devil
Comes to himself again! we are undone.

Enter VITTORIA *and the* Attendants

Gas. Strangle him in private.
What! will you call him again
To live in treble torments? for charity,
For Christian charity, avoid the chamber.
[VITTORIA *and the rest retire.*
Lod. You would prate, sir? This is a true-love-knot
Sent from the duke of Florence.
[BRACHIANO *is strangled.*
Gas. What, is it done?

Lod. The snuff is out. No woman-keeper i' th' world,
Though she had practised seven year at the pest-house,[n]
Could have done't quaintlier. My lords, he's dead.

VITTORIA *and the others come forward*

Omnes. Rest to his soul!
Vit. O me! this place is hell. [*Exit.*
Fran. How heavily she takes it!
Flam. O, yes, yes;
Had women navigable rivers in their eyes,
They would dispend them all. Surely, I wonder
Why we should wish more rivers to the city.
When they sell water so good cheap.[n] I'll tell thee,
These are but moonish shades of griefs or fears;
There's nothing sooner dry than women's tears.
Why, here's an end of all my harvest; he has given me nothing.
Court promises! let wise men count them cursed
For while you live, he that scores best, pays worst.
Fran. Sure, this was Florence' doing.
Flam. Very likely:
Those are found weighty strokes which come from th' hand,
But those are killing strokes which come from th' head.
O, the rare tricks of a Machiavelian![n]
He doth not come, like a gross plodding slave,
And buffet you to death; no, my quaint knave,
He tickles you to death, makes you die laughing,
As if you had swallowed down a pound of saffron.[n]
You see the feat, 'tis practised in a trice;
To teach court honesty, it jumps on ice.[n]
Fran. Now have the people liberty to talk,
And descant on his vices.
Flam. Misery of princes,
That must of force be censured by their slaves!

Not only blamed for doing things are ill,
But for not doing all that all men will:
One were better be a thresher. Ud'sdeath! I
Would fain speak with this duke yet.
Fran. Now he's dead?
Flam. I cannot conjure; but if prayers or oaths
Will get to th' speech of him, though forty devils
Wait on him in his livery of flames,
I'll speak to him, and shake him by the hand,
Though I be blasted. [*Exit.*
Fran. Excellent Lodovico!
What! did you terrify him at the last gasp?
Lod. Yes, and so idly, that the duke had like
T' have terrified us.
Fran. How?
Lod. You shall hear that hereafter.

Enter ZANCHE *the* Moor

See, yon's the infernal[n] that would make up sport.
Now to the revelation of that secret
She promised when she fell in love with you.
Fran. You're passionately met in this sad world.
Zan. I would have you look up, sir; these court tears
Claim not your tribute to them: let those weep,
That guiltily partake in the sad cause.
I knew last night, by a sad dream I had,
Some mischief would ensue; yet, to say truth,
My dream most concerned you.
Lod. Shall's fall a-dreaming?
Fran. Yes, and for fashion sake I'll dream with her.
Zan. Methought, sir, you came stealing to my bed.
Fran. Wilt thou believe me, sweeting? by this light,
I was a-dreamt on thee too; for methought
I saw thee naked.
Zan. Fie, sir! as I told you,

Methought you lay down by me.
Fran. So dreamt I;
And lest thou shouldst take cold, I covered thee
With this Irish mantle.
Zan. Verily I did dream
You were somewhat bold with me: but to come to't—
Lod. How! how! I hope you will not go to't here.
Fran. Nay, you must hear my dream out.
Zan. Well, sir, forth.
Fran. When I threw the mantle o'er thee, thou didst laugh
Exceedingly, methought.
Zan. Laugh!
Fran. And cried'st out,
The hair did tickle thee.
Zan. There was a dream indeed!
Lod. Mark her, I prithee, she simpers like the suds
A collier hath been washed in.
Zan. Come, sir; good fortune tends you. I did tell you
I would reveal a secret: Isabella,
The duke of Florence' sister, was empoisoned
By a fumed picture; and Camillo's neck
Was broke by damned Flamineo, the mischance
Laid on a vaulting-horse.
Fran. Most strange!
Zan. Most true.
Lod. The bed of snakes is broke.
Zan. I sadly do confess, I had a hand
In the black deed.
Fran. Thou kept'st their counsel.
Zan. Right;
For which, urged with contrition, I intend
This night to rob Vittoria.
Lod. Excellent penitence!
Usurers dream on't while they sleep out sermons.
Zan. To further our escape, I have entreated
Leave to retire me, till the funeral,

Unto a friend i' th' country: that excuse
Will further our escape. In coin and jewels
I shall at least make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns.
Fran. O noble wench!
Lod. Those crowns we'll share.
Zan. It is a dowry,
Methinks, should make that sunburnt proverb [n] false,
And wash the Æthiop white.
Fran. It shall; away!
Zan. Be ready for our flight.
Fran. An hour 'fore day.
[*Exit* ZANCHE.
O, strange discovery! why, till now we knew not
The circumstance of either of their deaths.

Re-enter ZANCHE

Zan. You'll wait about midnight in the chapel?
Fran. There. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
Lod. Why, now our action's justified.
Fran. Tush, for justice!
What harms it justice? we now, like the partridge,
Purge the disease with laurel; [n] for the fame
Shall crown the enterprise, and quit the shame. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Enter FLAMINEO *and* GASPARO, *at one door; another way,* GIOVANNI, *attended*

Gas. The young duke: did you e'er see a sweeter prince?
Flam. I have known a poor woman's bastard better favoured: this is behind him; now, to his face, all comparisons were hateful. Wise was the courtly peacock, that, being a great minion, and being compared for beauty

by some dotterels that stood by to the kingly eagle, said the eagle was a far fairer bird than herself, not in respect of her feathers, but in respect of her long tallants: his will grow out in time. — My gracious lord.

Giov. I pray leave me, sir.

Flam. Your grace must be merry; 'tis I have cause to mourn; for wot you, what said the little boy that rode behind his father on horseback?

Giov. Why, what said he?

Flam. When you are dead, father, said he, I hope then I shall ride in the saddle. O, 'tis a brave thing for a man to sit by himself! he may stretch himself in the stirrups, look about, and see the whole compass of the hemisphere. You're now, my lord, i' th' saddle.

Giov. Study your prayers, sir, and be penitent:
'Twere fit you'd think on what hath former been;
I have heard grief named the eldest child of sin. [*Exit.*

Flam. Study my prayers! he threatens me divinely! I am falling to pieces already. I care not, though, like Anacharsis,[n] I were pounded to death in a mortar: and yet that death were fitter for usurers, gold and themselves to be beaten together, to make a most cordial cullis[n] for the devil.

He hath his uncle's villainous look already,

Enter Courtier

In decimo sexto. — Now, sir, what are you?

Cour. It is the pleasure, sir, of the young duke, that you forbear the presence, and all rooms that owe him reverence.

Flam. So the wolf and the raven are very pretty fools when they are young. Is it your office, sir, to keep me out?

Cour. So the duke wills.

Flam. Verily, master courtier, extremity is not to be used in all offices: say, that a gentlewoman were taken

out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo, to the tower yonder, with nothing about her but her smock, would it not show a cruel part in the gentleman-porter to lay claim to her upper garment, pull it o'er her head and ears, and put her in naked?

Cour. Very good: you are merry. [*Exit.*

Flam. Doth he make a court-ejectment of me? a flaming fire-brand casts more smoke without a chimney than within't. I'll smoor some of them.

Enter FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS

How now? thou art sad.

Fran. I met even now with the most piteous sight.

Flam. Thou meet'st another here, a pitiful
Degraded courtier.

Fran. Your reverend mother
Is grown a very old woman in two hours.
I found them winding of Marcello's corse;
And there is such a solemn melody,
'Tween doleful songs, tears, and sad elegies;
Such as old grandames, watching by the dead,
Were wont t' outwear the nights with, that, believe me,
I had no eyes to guide me forth the room,
They were so o'ercharged with water.

Flam. I will see them.

Fran. 'Twere much uncharity in you; for your sight
Will add unto their tears.

Flam. I will see them:
They are behind the traverse;[n] I'll discover
Their superstitious howling.

CORNELIA, *the* Moor, *and three other ladies* ***discovered*** *winding* MARCELLO'S *corse. A song*

Cor. This rosemary is withered; pray, get fresh.
I would have these herbs grow up in his grave,

When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bays,
I'll tie a garland here about his head;
'Twill keep my boy from lightning. This sheet
I have kept this twenty year, and every day
Hallowed it with my prayers; I did not think
He should have wore it.
Zan. Look you, who are yonder?
Cor. O, reach me the flowers!
Zan. Her ladyship's foolish.
Woman. Alas, her grief
Hath turned her child again!
Cor. You're very welcome:
There's rosemary for you, and rue for you, [*To* FLAMINEO.
Heartsease for you; I pray make much of it,
I have left more for myself.[n]
Fran. Lady, who's this?
Cor. You are, I take it, the grave-maker.
Flam. So.
Zan. 'Tis Flamineo.
Cor. Will you make me such a fool? here's a white hand:
Can blood so soon be washed out? let me see;
When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,
And the strange cricket i' th' oven sings and hops,
When yellow spots do on your hands appear,
Be certain then you of a corse shall hear.
Out upon't, how 'tis specked! h'as handled a toad sure.
Cowslip water is good for the memory:
Pray, buy me three ounces of't.
Flam. I would I were from hence.
Cor. Do you hear, sir?
I'll give you a saying which my grandmother
Was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing o'er
Unto her lute.
Flam. Do, an you will,[n] do.
[CORNELIA *doth this in several forms of distraction.*
Cor. Call for the robin redbreast, and the wren,

Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.
They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel;
But I have an answer for them:
Let holy church receive him duly,
Since he paid the church-tithes truly.
His wealth is summed, and this is all his store,
This poor men get, and great men get no more.
Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.
Bless you all, good people.

[*Exeunt* CORNELIA *and* Ladies.

Flam. I have a strange thing in me, to th' which
I cannot give a name, without it be
Compassion. I pray leave me. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.
This night I'll know the utmost of my fate;
I'll be resolved what my rich sister means
T' assign me for my service. I have lived
Riotously ill, like some that live in court,
And sometimes when my face was full of smiles,
Have felt the maze of conscience in my breast.
Oft gay and honoured robes those tortures try:
"We think caged birds sing, when indeed they cry."
Ha! I can stand thee: nearer, nearer yet.

Enter BRACHIANO'S Ghost, *in his leather cassock and breeches, boots, a cowl; in his hand a pot of lily flowers, with a skull in it*

What a mockery hath death made thee! thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou? in yon starry gallery?

Or in the cursèd dungeon? — no? not speak?
Pray, sir, resolve me, what religion's best
For a man to die in? or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live?
That's the most necessary question.
Not answer? are you still, like some great men
That only walk like shadows up and down,
And to no purpose; say —
[*The* Ghost *throws earth upon him, and shows him the skull.*
What's that? O fatal! he throws earth upon me.
A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers!
I pray speak, sir: our Italian churchmen
Make us believe dead men hold conference
With their familiars, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with them.
[*Exit* Ghost.
He's gone; and see, the skull and earth are vanished.
This is beyond melancholy. I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging,
And sum up all these horrors: the disgrace
The prince threw on me; next the piteous sight
Of my dead brother; and my mother's dotage;
And last this terrible vision: all these
Shall with Vittoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood. [*Exit.*

SCENE V[n]

Enter FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, *and* HORTENSIO

Lod. My lord, upon my soul you shall no further;
You have most ridiculously engaged yourself
Too far already. For my part, I have paid
All my debts: so, if I should chance to fall,
My creditors fall not with me; and I vow,
To quit all in this bold assembly,

To the meanest follower. My lord, leave the city,
Or I'll forswear the murder. [*Exit.*
Fran. Farewell, Lodovico:
If thou dost perish in this glorious act,
I'll rear unto thy memory that fame,
Shall in the ashes keep alive thy name. [*Exit.*
Hor. There's some black deed on foot. I'll presently
Down to the citadel, and raise some force.
These strong court-factions, that do brook no checks,
In the career oft break the riders' necks. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI[n]

Enter VITTORIA *with a book in her hand*, ZANCHE; FLAMINEO *following them*

Flam. What? are you at your prayers? give o'er.
Vit. How, ruffian!
Flam. I come to you 'bout wordly business.
Sit down, sit down: nay, stay, blouze, you may hear it:
The doors are fast enough.
Vit. Ha! are you drunk?
Flam. Yes, yes, with wormwood water; you shall taste
Some of it presently.
Vit. What intends the fury?
Flam. You are my lord's executrix; and I claim
Reward for my long service.
Vit. For your service!
Flam. Come, therefore, here is pen and ink, set down
What you will give me.
Vit. There. [*She writes.*
Flam. Ha! have you done already?
'Tis a most short conveyance.
Vit. I will read it:
I give that portion to thee, and no other,
Which Cain groaned under, having slain his brother.[n]

Flam. A most courtly patent to beg by.
Vit. You are a villain!
Flam. Is't come to this? they say affrights cure agues:
Thou hast a devil in thee; I will try
If I can scare him from thee. Nay, sit still:
My lord hath left me yet two case of jewels,
Shall make me scorn your bounty; you shall see them.
[*Exit.*
Vit. Sure he's distracted.
Zan. O, he's desperate!
For your own safety give him gentle language.
[*He re-enters with two case of pistols.*[n]
Flam. Look, these are better far at a dead lift,
Than all your jewel-house.
Vit. And yet, methinks,
These stones[n] have no fair lustre, they are ill set.
Flam. I'll turn the right side towards you: you shall see
How they will sparkle.
Vit. Turn this horror from me!
What do you want? what would you have me do?
Is not all mine yours? have I any children?
Flam. Pray thee, good woman, do not trouble me
With this vain worldly business; say your prayers:
I made a vow to my deceased lord,
Neither yourself nor I should outlive him
The numbering of four hours.
Vit. Did he enjoin it?
Flam. He did, and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Lest any should enjoy thee after him,
That urged him vow me to it. For my death,
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing,
If he could not be safe in his own court,
Being a great duke, what hope then for us?
Vit. This is your melancholy, and despair.
Flam. Away!

Fool thou art, to think that politicians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries
And let the cause live. Shall we groan in irons,
Or be a shameful and weighty burthen
To a public scaffold? This is my resolve:
I would not live at any man's entreaty,
Nor die at any's bidding.
Vit. Will you hear me?
Flam. My life hath done service to other men,
My death shall serve mine own turn: make you ready.
Vit. Do you mean to die indeed?
Flam. With as much pleasure,
As e'er my father gat me.
Vit. Are the doors locked?
Zan. Yes, madam.
Vit. Are you grown an atheist? will you turn your body
Which is the goodly palace of the soul,
To the soul's slaughter-house? O, the cursèd devil,
Which doth present us with all other sins
Thrice candied o'er, despair with gall and stibium;
Yet we carouse it off; — [*Aside to* ZANCHE.] Cry out for help! —
Make us forsake that which was made for man,
The world, to sink to that was made for devils,
Eternal darkness!
Zan. Help, help!
Flam. I'll stop your throat
With winter plums.
Vit. I prithee yet remember,
Millions are now in graves, which at last day
Like mandrakes shall rise shrieking.[n]
Flam. Leave your prating,
For these are but grammatical laments,[n]
Feminine arguments: and they move me,
As some in pulpits move their auditory,
More with their exclamation, than sense

Of reason, or sound doctrine.
Zan. [*Aside.*] Gentle madam,
Seem to consent, only persuade him teach
The way to death; let him die first.
Vit. 'Tis good, I apprehend it. —
To kill one's self is meat that we must take
Like pills, not chewed, but quickly swallow it;
The smart o' th' wound, or weakness of the hand,
May else bring treble torments.
Flam. I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life,
Which is not able to die.
Vit. O, but frailty!
Yet I am now resolved; farewell, affliction!
Behold, Brachiano, I that while you lived
Did make a flaming altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you, now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all. Farewell, Zanche!
Zan. How, madam! do you think I'll outlive you;
Especially when my best self, Flamineo,
Goes the same voyage?
Flam. O, most lovèd Moor!
Zan. Only, by all my love, let me entreat you,—
Since it is most necessary one of us
Do violence on ourselves, — let you or I
Be her sad taster,[n] teach her how to die.
Flam. Thou dost instruct me nobly; take these pistols,
Because my hand is stained with blood already:
Two of these you shall level at my breast,
The other 'gainst your own, and so we'll die
Most equally contented: but first swear
Not to outlive me.
Vit. and Zan. Most religiously.
Flam. Then here's an end of me; farewell, daylight!
And, O contemptible physic! that dost take

So long a study, only to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee.
[*Showing the pistols.*
These are two cupping-glasses, that shall draw
All my infected blood out. Are you ready?
Both. Ready.
Flam. Whither shall I go now? O Lucian, thy ridiculous purgatory![n] to find Alexander the Great cobbling shoes, Pompey tagging points,[n] and Julius Cæsar making hair-buttons! Hannibal selling blacking, and Augustus crying garlic! Charlemagne selling lists by the dozen, and king Pepin crying apples in a cart drawn with one horse!
Whether I resolve to fire, earth, water, air,
Or all the elements by scruples, I know not,
Nor greatly care — Shoot, shoot,
Of all deaths, the violent death is best;
For from ourselves it steals ourselves so fast,
The pain, once apprehended, is quite past.
[*They shoot, and run to him, and tread upon him.*
Vit. What, are you dropped?
Flam. I am mixed with earth already: as you are noble,
Perform your vows, and bravely follow me.
Vit. Whither? to hell?
Zan. To most assured damnation?
Vit. O thou most cursed devil!
Zan. Thou art caught —
Vit. In thine own engine. I tread the fire out
That would have been my ruin.
Flam. Will you be perjured? what a religious oath was Styx, that the gods never durst swear by, and violate! O that we had such an oath to minister, and to be so well kept in our courts of justice!
Vit. Think whither thou art going.
Zan. And remember
What villainies thou hast acted.

Vit. This thy death
Shall make me, like a blazing ominous star:
Look up and tremble.
Flam. O, I am caught with a springe!
Vit. You see the fox comes many times short home;
'Tis here proved true.
Flam. Killed with a couple of braches!
Vit. No fitter offering for the infernal furies,
Than one in whom they reigned while he was living.
Flam. O, the way's dark and horrid! I cannot see:
Shall I have no company?
Vit. O yes, thy sins
Do run before thee to fetch fire from hell,
To light thee thither.
Flam. O, I smell soot,
Most stinking soot! the chimney's afire:
My liver's parboiled, like Scotch holly-bread;
There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds.
Wilt thou outlive me?
Zan. Yes, and drive a stake [n]
Through thy body; for we'll give it out,
Thou didst this violence upon thyself.
Flam. O cunning devils! now I have tried your love,
And doubled all your reaches.[n] I am not wounded.
[FLAMINEO *riseth.*
The pistols held no bullets; 'twas a plot
To prove your kindness to me; and I live
To punish your ingratitude. I knew,
One time or other, you would find a way
To give me a strong potion. O men,
That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted
With howling wives, ne'er trust them! they'll re-marry
Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the spider
Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs.
How cunning you were to discharge! do you practise
at the artillery-yard?[n] Trust a woman! never, never!
Brachiano be my precedent. We lay our souls to pawn

to the devil for a little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of sale. That ever man should marry! For one Hypermnestra that saved her lord and husband, forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in one night.[n] There was a shoal of virtuous horse-leeches! Here are two other instruments.

Enter LODOVICO, GASPARO

Vit. Help! help!
Flam. What noise is that? ha! false keys i' th' court!
Lod. We have brought you a mask.
Flam. A matachin[n] it seems
By your drawn swords. Churchmen[n] turned revellers!
Gas. Isabella! Isabella!
Lod. Do you know us now?
Flam. Lodovico! and Gasparo!
Lod. Yes; and that Moor the duke gave pension to
Was the great duke of Florence.
Vit. O, we are lost!
Flam. You shall not take justice forth from my hands,—
O, let me kill her! — I'll cut my safety
Through your coats of steel. Fate's a spaniel,
We cannot beat it from us. What remains now?
Let all that do ill, take this precedent:
Man may his fate foresee, but not prevent:
And of all axioms this shall win the prize,
'Tis better to be fortunate than wise.
Gas. Bind him to the pillar.
Vit. O, your gentle pity!
I have seen a blackbird that would sooner fly
To a man's bosom, than to stay the gripe
Of the fierce sparrow-hawk.
Gas. Your hope deceives you.
Vit. If Florence be i' th' court, would he would kill me!
Gas. Fool! princes give rewards with their own hands,
But death or punishment by the hands of others.

Lod. Sirrah, you once did strike me; I'll strike you
Unto the centre.
Flam. Thou'lt do it like a hangman, a base hangman,
Not like a noble fellow, for thou see'st
I cannot strike again.
Lod. Dost laugh?
Flam. Would'st have me die, as I was born, in whining?
Gas. Recommend yourself to heaven.
Flam. No, I will carry mine own commendations thither.
Lod. O, could I kill you forty times a day,
And use't four year together, 'twere too little!
Nought grieves but that you are too few to feed
The famine of our vengeance. What dost think on?
Flam. Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions.
I am i' th' way to study a long silence:
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts.
Lod. O thou glorious strumpet!
Could I divide thy breath from this pure air
When't leaves thy body, I would suck it up,
And breathe't upon some dunghill.
Vit. You, my death's-man!
Methinks thou dost not look horrid enough,
Thou hast too good a face to be a hangman:
If thou be, do thy office in right form;
Fall down upon thy knees, and ask forgiveness.
Lod. O, thou hast been a most prodigious comet!
But I'll cut off your train, — kill the Moor first.
Vit. You shall not kill her first; behold my breast:
I will be waited on in death; my servant
Shall never go before me.
Gas. Are you so brave?
Vit. Yes, I shall welcome death,
As princes do some great ambassadors;

I'll meet thy weapon half way.
Lod. Thou dost tremble:
Methinks, fear should dissolve thee into air.
Vit. O, thou art deceived, I am too true a woman!
Conceit can never kill me. I'll tell thee what,
I will not in my death shed one base tear;
Or if look pale, for want of blood, not fear.
Gas. Thou art my task, black fury.
Zan. I have blood
As red as either of theirs: wilt drink some?
'Tis good for the falling-sickness. I am proud
Death cannot alter my complexion,
For I shall ne'er look pale.
Lod. Strike, strike,
With a joint motion.
[*They stab* VITTORIA, ZANCHE, *and* FLAMINEO.
Vit. 'Twas a manly blow;
The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking infant;
And then thou wilt be famous.
Flam. O, what blade is't?
A Toledo, or an English fox?
I ever thought a cutler should distinguish
The cause of my death, rather than a doctor.
Search my wound deeper; tent it with the steel
That made it.
Vit. O, my greatest sin lay in my blood!
Now my blood pays for't.
Flam. Th'art a noble sister!
I love thee now: if woman do breed man,
She ought to teach him manhood: fare thee well.
Know, many glorious women that are famed
For masculine virtue, have been vicious,
Only a happier silence did betide them:
She hath no faults, who hath the art to hide them.
Vit. My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven, I know not whither.
Flam. Then cast anchor.

Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear;
But seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are near.
We cease to grieve, cease to be fortune's slaves,
Nay, cease to die by dying. Art thou gone?
And thou so near the bottom: false report,
Which says that women vie with the nine Muses
For nine tough durable lives! I do not look
Who went before, nor who shall follow me;
No, at myself I will begin and end.
While we look up to heaven, we confound
Knowledge with knowledge. O, I am in a mist!
Vit. O, happy they that never saw the court,
Nor ever knew great men but by report! [*Dies.*
Flam. I recover like a spent taper, for a flash,
And instantly go out.
Let all that belong to great men remember th' old wives' tradition, to be like the lions i' th' Tower on Candlemasday;[n] to mourn if the sun shine, for fear of the pitiful remainder of winter to come.
'Tis well yet there's some goodness in my death;
My life was a black charnel. I have caught
An everlasting cold; I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably. Farewell, glorious villains.
This busy trade of life appears most vain,
Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.
Let no harsh flattering bells resound my knell;
Strike, thunder, and strike loud, to my farewell! [*Dies.*

Enter Ambassadors *and* GIOVANNI

Eng. Amb. This way, this way! break ope the doors! this way!
Lod. Ha! are we betrayed?
Why then let's constantly die all together;
And having finished this most noble deed,
Defy the worst of fate, not fear to bleed.
Eng. Amb. Keep back the prince: shoot, shoot!

[*They wound* LODOVICO.

Lod. O, I am wounded!
I fear I shall be ta'en.
Giov. You bloody villains,
By what authority have you committed
This massacre?
Lod. By thine.
Giov. Mine!
Lod. Yes; thy uncle,
Which is a part of thee, enjoined us to't:
Thou know'st me, I am sure; I am Count Lodowick;
And thy most noble uncle in disguise
Was last night in thy court.
Giov. Ha!
Lod. Yes, that Moor
Thy father chose his pensioner.
Giov. He turned murderer!
Away with them to prison, and to torture:
All that have hands in this shall taste our justice.
As I hope Heaven.
Lod. I do glory yet,
That I can call this act mine own. For my part,
The rack, the gallows, and the torturing wheel,
Shall be but sound sleeps to me; here's my rest;
I limned this night-piece, and it was my best.
Giov. Remove the bodies. See, my honoured lord,
What use you ought make of their punishment.
Let guilty men remember, their black deeds
Do lean on crutches made of slender reeds. [*Exeunt.*

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

Webster borrowed the plot of *The Duchess of Malfi* from the twenty-third novel of the second volume of Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, 1567. None of the other accounts, of which there are several, furnish such complete details. The subject was treated in other literatures, notably by Lope de Vega in his *El Mayordomo de la Duquesa de Amalfi*, written as early as 1609, but not published until 1618, four years after Webster's version must have been on the stage. The horrors of Bosola's torture of the Duchess have recently been found to have been derived from Sidney's *Arcadia*. On the subject, see *Notes and Queries*, Series X, Vol. 10. *The Duchess of Malfi* was on the stage by 1614, though not in print until 1623.

DEDICATION

To the Rt. Hon. GEORGE HARDING, Baron Berkeley, *of Berkeley Castle, and Knight of the Order of the Bath to the illustrious Prince Charles.*

My Noble Lord,

THAT I may present my excuse why, being a stranger to your lordship, I offer this poem to your patronage, I plead this warrant: — men who never saw the sea yet desire to behold that regiment of waters, choose some eminent river to guide them thither, and make that, as it were, their conduct or postilion: by the like ingenious means has your fame arrived at my knowledge, receiving it from some of worth, who both in contemplation and practice owe to your honour their clearest service. I do not altogether look up at your title; the ancientest nobility being but a relic of time past, and the truest honour indeed being for a man to confer honour on himself, which your learning strives to propagate, and shall make you arrive at the dignity of a great example. I am confident this work is not unworthy your honour's perusal; for by such poems as this poets have kissed the hands of great princes, and drawn their gentle eyes to look down upon their sheets of paper when the poets themselves were bound up in their winding-sheets. The like courtesy from your lordship shall make you live in your grave, and laurel spring out of it, when the ignorant scorners of the Muses, that like worms in libraries seem to live only to destroy learning, shall wither neglected and forgotten. This work and myself I humbly present to your approved censure, it being the utmost of my wishes to have your honourable self my weighty and perspicuous comment; which grace so done me shall ever be acknowledged

By your lordship's in all duty and observance,

JOHN WEBSTER.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FERDINAND, Duke of Calabria.
The CARDINAL, his Brother.
ANTONIO BOLOGNA, Steward of the household to the DUCHESS.
DELIO, his Friend.
DANIEL DE BOSOLA, Gentleman of the horse to the DUCHESS.
FOROBOSCO, an Attendant.
Count MALATESTE.
CASTRUCCIO, an old Lord.
THE MARQUIS OF PESCARA.
RODERIGO.
SILVIO.
GRISOLAN.
Doctor.
The Several Madmen.
Court Officers.
Three Young Children.
Two Pilgrims.

The DUCHESS of Malfi.
CARIOLA, her Woman.
JULIA, CASTRUCCIO'S wife, and the CARDINAL'S Mistress.
Old Lady.

SCENE — MALFI, ROME, LORETTO, and MILAN

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I[n]

Enter ANTONIO *and* DELIO

Delio. You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio;
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit.
How do you like the French court?
Ant. I admire it:
In seeking to reduce both state and people
To a fixed order, their judicious king
Begins at home; quits first his royal palace
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons, which he sweetly terms
His master's masterpiece, the work of Heaven;
Considering duly, that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
Pure silver drops in general, but if't chance
Some cursed example poison't near the head,
Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
And what is't makes this blessèd government,
But a most provident council, who dare freely
Inform him the corruption[n] of the times?
Though some o' th' court hold it presumption
To instruct princes what they ought to do,
It is a noble duty to inform them
What they ought to foresee. Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall; yet I observe his railing
Is not for simple love of piety:

Indeed he rails at those things which he wants;
Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
Bloody, or envious, as any man,
If he had means to be so. Here's the Cardinal.

Enter BOSOLA *and* Cardinal

Bos. I do haunt you still.

Card. So.[n]

Bos. I have done you better service than to be slighted thus. Miserable age, where only the reward of doing well, is the doing of it!

Card. You enforce your merit too much.

Bos. I fell into the galleys in your service, where, for two years together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt,[n] with a knot on the shoulder, after the fashion of a Roman mantle. Slighted thus! I will thrive some way: blackbirds fatten best in hard weather; why not I in these dog-days?

Card. Would you could become honest!

Bos. With all your divinity do but direct me the way to it. I have known many travel far for it, and yet return as arrant knaves as they went forth, because they carried themselves always along with them.

[*Exit* Cardinal.

Are you gone? Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil, but this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil, and make him worse.

Ant. He hath denied thee some suit?

Bos. He and his brother are like plum-trees that grow crooked over standing-pools; they are rich, and o'erladen with fruit, but none but crows, pies, and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering panders, I would hang on their ears like a horseleech, till I were full, and then drop off. I pray leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies, in expectation to be advanced to-morrow? What creature ever fed worse,

than hoping Tantalus? nor ever died any man more fearfully, than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for hawks and dogs, when they have done us service: but for a soldier that hazards his limbs in a battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last supportation.[n]

Delio. Geometry!

Bos. Aye, to hang in a fair pair of slings, take his latter swing in the world upon an honourable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital. Fare ye well, sir: and yet do not you scorn us, for places in the court are but like beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower. [*Exit.*

Delio. I knew this fellow seven years in the galleys
For a notorious murder; and 'twas thought
The Cardinal suborned it: he was released
By the French general, Gaston de Foix,
When he recovered Naples.

Ant. 'Tis great pity,
He should be thus neglected: I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness; for, I'll tell you,
If too immoderate sleep be truly said
To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents, and their close rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter ANTONIO, DELIO, FERDINAND, CASTRUCCIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN

Delio. The presence 'gins to fill: you promised me
To make me the partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

Ant. The lord Cardinal's,

And other strangers, that are now in court?
I shall: here comes the great Calabrian Duke.

Ferd. Who took the ring oftenest?[n]

Silvio. Antonio Bologna, my lord.

Ferd. Our sister Duchess' great master of her household: give him the jewel. When shall we leave this sportive action, and fall to action indeed?

Cast. Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to war in person.

Ferd. Now, for some gravity:—why, my lord?

Cast. It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary a prince descend to be a captain.

Ferd. No?

Cast. No, my lord, he were far better do it by a deputy.

Ferd. Why should he not as well sleep, or eat by a deputy? This might take idle, offensive, and base office from him, whereas the other deprives him of honour.

Cast. Believe my experience: that realm is never long in quiet, where the ruler is a soldier.

Ferd. Thou toldest me thy wife could not endure fighting.

Cast. True, my lord.

Ferd. And of a jest she broke of a captain she met full of wounds: I have forgot it.

Cast. She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow, to lie like the children of Ismael, all in tents.[n]

Ferd. Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the chirurgeons o' th' city, for although gallants should quarrel, and had drawn their weapons, and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

Cast. That she would, my lord. How do you like my Spanish gennet?

Rod. He is all fire.

Ferd. I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind; he runs as if he were ballassed with quicksilver.

Silvio. True, my lord, he reels from the tilt often.

Rod. Gris. Ha, ha, ha!

Ferd. Why do you laugh? methinks you that are courtiers should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, not laugh but when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

Cast. True, my lord; I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorned to seem to have so silly a wit, as to understand it.

Ferd. But I can laugh at your fool,[n] my lord.

Cast. He cannot speak, you know, but he makes faces: my lady cannot abide him.

Ferd. No?

Cast. Nor endure to be in merry company; for she says too much laughing, and too much company, fills her too full of the wrinkle.

Ferd. I would then have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass. I shall shortly visit you at Milan, lord Silvio.

Silvio. Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

Ferd. You are a good horseman, Antonio: you have excellent riders in France: what do you think of good horsemanship?

Ant. Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution, that raise the mind to noble action.

Ferd. You have bespoke it worthily.

Silvio. Your brother, the lord Cardinal, and sister Duchess.

Enter Cardinal, Duchess, CARIOLA, *and* JULIA

Card. Are the galleys come about?

Gris. They are, my lord.

Ferd. Here's the lord Silvio is come to take his leave.

Delio. Now, sir, your promise: [n] what's that Cardinal?

I mean his temper? they say he's a brave fellow,
Will play his five thousand crowns at tennis,[n] dance,
Court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats.

Ant. Some such flashes superficially hang on him, for form, but observe his inward character: he is a melancholy churchman. The spring in his face is nothing but the engendering of toads;[n] where he is jealous of any man, he lays worse plots for him than ever was imposed on Hercules, for he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers, atheists, and a thousand such political monsters.[n] He should have been Pope, but instead of coming to it by the primitive decency of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely, and so impudently, as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge. Some good he hath done —

Delio. You have given too much of him: what's his brother?

Ant. The duke there? a most perverse and turbulent nature:
What appears in him mirth is merely outside;
If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh
All honesty out of fashion.

Delio. Twins?

Ant. In quality.
He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits
With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' th' bench
Only to entrap offenders in their answers;
Dooms men to death by information,[n]
Rewards by hearsay.

Delio. Then the law to him
Is like a foul black cobweb to a spider,
He makes it his dwelling and a prison
To entangle those shall feed him.

Ant. Most true:
He never pays debts unless they be shrewd turns,
And those he will confess that he doth owe.
Last, for his brother there, the Cardinal,

They that do flatter him most say oracles
Hang at his lips; and verily I believe them,
For the devil speaks in them.
But for their sister, the right noble duchess,
You never fixed your eye on three fair medals
Cast in one figure,[n] of so different temper.
For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
You only will begin then to be sorry
When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,
She held it less vainglory, to talk much,
Than your penance to hear her: whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
That it were able to raise one to a galliard
That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence,
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practised in such noble virtue,
That sure her nights, nay more, her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven, than other ladies' shrifts.
Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses,
And dress themselves in her.

Delio. Fie, Antonio,
You play the wire-drawer with her commendations.[n]

Ant. I'll case the picture up: only thus much;
All her particular worth grows to this sum;
She stains the time past, lights the time to come.

Cari. You must attend my lady in the gallery,
Some half an hour hence.

Ant. I shall.

[*Exeunt* ANTONIO *and* DELIO.

Ferd. Sister, I have a suit to you.

Duch. To me, sir?

Ferd. A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,
One that was in the galleys —

Duch. Yes, I know him.

Ferd. A worthy fellow h'is: pray let me entreat for

The provisorship of your horse.
Duch. Your knowledge of him
Commends him and prefers him.
Ferd. Call him hither. [*Exit* Attendant.
We are now upon parting. — Good lord Silvio,
Do us commend to all our noble friends
At the leaguer.
Silvio. Sir, I shall.
Ferd. You are for Milan?
Silvio. I am.
Duch. Bring the caroches: we'll bring you down
To the haven.
[*Exeunt all but the* Cardinal *and* FERDINAND.
Card. Be sure you entertain that Bosola
For your intelligence: I would not be seen in't;
And therefore many times I have slighted him,
When he did court our furtherance, as this morning.
Ferd. Antonio, the great master of her household,
Had been far fitter.
Card. You are deceived in him:
His nature is too honest for such business.
He comes: I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Enter BOSOLA

Bos. I was lured to you.
Ferd. My brother here, the Cardinal, could never
Abide you.
Bos. Never since he was in my debt.
Ferd. May be some oblique character in your face
Made him suspect you.
Bos. Doth he study physiognomy?
There's no more credit to be given to th' face,
Than to a sick man's urine, which some call
The physician's whore, because she cozens him.
He did suspect me wrongfully.
Ferd. For that

You must give great men leave to take their times.
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceived:
You see, the oft shaking of the cedar-tree
Fastens it more at root.
Bos. Yet, take heed;
For to suspect a friend unworthily,
Instructs him the next way to suspect you,
And prompts him to deceive you.
Ferd. There's gold.
Bos. So,
What follows? never rained such showers as these
Without thunderbolts i' th' tail of them: whose throat must I cut?
Ferd. Your inclination to shed blood rides post
Before my occasion to use you. I give you that
To live i' th' court here, and observe the duchess;
To note all the particulars of her 'haviour,
What suitors do solicit her for marriage,
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow:
I would not have her marry again.
Bos. No, sir?
Ferd. Do not you ask the reason; but be satisfied
I say I would not.
Bos. It seems you would create me
One of your familiars.
Ferd. Familiar! what's that?
Bos. Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh;
An intelligencer.
Ferd. Such a kind of thriving thing
I would wish thee; and ere long, thou may'st arrive
At a higher place by't.
Bos. Take your devils,
Which hell calls angels: these cursed gifts would make
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;
And should I take these, they'd take me to hell.
Ferd. Sir, I'll take nothing from you, that I have given:

There is a place that I procured for you
This morning, the provisorship o' th' horse;
Have you heard on't?
Bos. No.
Ferd. 'Tis yours: is't not worth thanks?
Bos. I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty
(Which makes men truly noble) e'er should make
Me a villain. O, that to avoid ingratitude
For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er; and what heaven terms vile
That names he complimental.
Ferd. Be yourself;
Keep your old garb of melancholy; 'twill express
You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em: this will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic dormouse —
Bos. As I have seen some,
Feed in a lord's dish, half asleep, not seeming
To listen to any talk; and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What's my place?
The provisorship o' th' horse? say, then, my corruption
Grew out of horse-dung: [n] I am your creature.
Ferd. Away!
Bos. Let good men, for good deeds, covet good fame,
Since place and riches, oft are bribes of shame:
Sometimes the devil doth preach. [*Exit.*

Enter Duchess, Cardinal, *and* CARIOLA

Card. We are to part from you; and your own discretion
Must now be your director.
Ferd. You are a widow:
You know already what man is; and therefore

Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence —
Card. No, nor anything without the addition, honour,
Sway your high blood.
Ferd. Marry! they are most luxurious,
Will wed twice.
Card. O, fie!
Ferd. Their livers are more spotted
Than Laban's sheep.[n]
Duch. Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have passed through most jewellers' hands.
Ferd. Whores, by that rule, are precious.
Duch. Will you hear me?
I'll never marry.
Card. So most widows say;
But commonly that motion[n] lasts no longer
Than the turning of an hour-glass: the funeral sermon
And it, end both together.
Ferd. Now hear me:
You live in a rank pasture here, i' th' court;
There is a kind of honey-dew that's deadly;
'Twill poison your fame; look to't: be not cunning;
For they whose faces do belie their hearts,
Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years,
Aye, and give the devil suck.
Duch. This is terrible good counsel.
Ferd. Hypocrisy is woven of a fine small thread,
Subtler than Vulcan's engine:[n] yet, believ't,
Your darkest actions, nay, your privat'st thoughts,
Will come to light.
Card. You may flatter yourself,
And take your own choice; privately be married
Under the eaves of night —
Ferd. Think't the best voyage
That e'er you made; like the irregular crab,
Which, though't goes backward, thinks that it goes right,
Because it goes its own way: but observe,
Such weddings may more properly be said

To be executed, than celebrated.
Card. The marriage night
Is the entrance into some prison.
Ferd. And those joys,
Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps
Which do forerun man's mischief.
Card. Fare you well.
Wisdom begins at the end: remember it. [*Exit.*
Duch. I think this speech between you both was studied,
It came so roundly off.
Ferd. You are my sister;
This was my father's poniard, do you see?
I'd be loath to see't look rusty, 'cause 'twas his.
I would have you to give o'er these chargeable revels,
A visor and a mask are whispering rooms
That were never built for goodness; — fare ye well,
And women like that part which, like the lamprey,
Hath never a bone in't.
Duch. Fie, sir!
Ferd. Nay,
I mean the tongue; variety of courtship:
What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale
Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty widow. [*Exit.*
Duch. Shall this move me? If all my royal kindred
Lay in my way unto this marriage,
I'd make them my low footsteps: and even now,
Even in this hate, as men in some great battles,
By apprehending danger, have achieved
Almost impossible actions, — I have heard soldiers say so, —
So I through frights and threatenings will assay
This dangerous venture. Let old wives report
I winked[n] and chose a husband. Cariola,
To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life — my fame.
Cari. Both shall be safe:
For I'll conceal this secret from the world,

As warily as those that trade in poison
Keep poison from their children.
Duch. Thy protestation
Is ingenious and hearty: I believe it.
Is Antonio come?
Cari. He attends you.
Duch. Good dear soul,
Leave me; but place thyself behind the arras,
Where thou may'st overhear us. Wish me good speed,
For I am going into a wilderness
Where I shall find nor path, nor friendly clue,
To be my guide. [*Exit* CARIOLA.

Enter ANTONIO

I sent for you: sit down;
Take pen and ink, and write: are you ready?
Ant. Yes.
Duch. What did I say?
Ant. That I should write somewhat.
Duch. O, I remember.
After this triumph and this large expense,
It's fit, like thrifty husbands, we inquire
What's laid up for to-morrow.
Ant. So please your beauteous excellence.
Duch. Beauteous!
Indeed I thank you: I look young for your sake;
You have ta'en my cares upon you.
Ant. I'll fetch your grace
The particulars of your revenue and expense.
Duch. O, you are an upright treasurer; but you mistook:
For when I said I meant to make inquiry
What's laid up for to-morrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.
Ant. Where?
Duch. In Heaven.
I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes should,

In perfect memory), and, I pray, sir, tell me
Were not one better make it smiling, thus,
Than in deep groans, and terrible ghastly looks,
As if the gifts we parted with procured
That violent distraction?
Ant. O, much better.
Duch. If I had a husband now, this care were quit:
But I intend to make you overseer.
What good deed shall we first remember? say.
Ant. Begin with that first good deed begun i' th' world
After man's creation, the sacrament of marriage:
I'd have you first provide for a good husband;
Give him all.
Duch. All?
Ant. Yes, your excellent self.
Duch. In a winding sheet?
Ant. In a couple.
Duch. St. Winifred, that were a strange will!
Ant. 'Twere strange if there were no will in you
To marry again.
Duch. What do you think of marriage?
Ant. I take't, as those that deny purgatory,
It locally contains, or heaven, or hell,
There's no third place in't.
Duch. How do you affect it?
Ant. My banishment, feeding my melancholy,
Would often reason thus.
Duch. Pray let's hear it.
Ant. Say a man never marry, nor have children,
What takes that from him? only the bare name
Of being a father, or the weak delight
To see the little wanton ride a cock-horse
Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter
Like a taught starling.
Duch. Fie, fie, what's all this?
One of your eyes is bloodshot; use my ring to't,
They say 'tis very sovereign: [n] 'twas my wedding ring

And I did vow never to part with it
But to my second husband.
Ant. You have parted with it now.
Duch. Yes, to help your eyesight.
Ant. You have made me stark blind.
Duch. How?
Ant. There is a saucy and ambitious devil,
Is dancing in this circle.
Duch. Remove him.
Ant. How?
Duch. There needs small conjuration, when your finger
May do it; thus; is it fit?
Ant. What said you? [*He kneels.*
Duch. Sir,
This goodly roof of yours,[n] is too low built;
I cannot stand upright in't nor discourse,
Without I raise it higher: raise yourself;
Or, if you please, my hand to help you: so.
Ant. Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
That is not kept in chains, and close-pent rooms,
But in fair lightsome lodgings, and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling visitants,
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim
Whereto your favours tend: but he's a fool,
That being a-cold, would thrust his hands i' th' fire
To warm them.
Duch. So now the ground's broke,
You may discover what a wealthy mine
I make you lord of.
Ant. O my unworthiness!
Duch. You were ill to sell yourself:
This darkening of your worth[n] is not like that
Which tradesmen use i' th' city; their false lights
Are to rid bad wares off: and I must tell you,
If you will know where breathes a complete man

(I speak it without flattery), turn your eyes,
And progress through yourself.
Ant. Were there nor heaven nor hell,
I should be honest: I have long served virtue,
And ne'er ta'en wages of her.
Duch. Now she pays it.
The misery of us that are born great!
We are forced to woo, because none dare woo us;
And as a tyrant doubles with his words,
And fearfully equivocates, so we
Are forced to express our violent passions
In riddles, and in dreams, and leave the path
Of simple virtue, which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag
You have left me heartless; mine is in your bosom:
I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble:
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh,
To fear, more than to love me. Sir, be confident:
What is't distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir;
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster,
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man!
I do here put off all vain ceremony,
And only do appear to you a young widow
That claims you for her husband, and like a widow,
I use but half a blush in't.
Ant. Truth speak for me:
I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.
Duch. I thank you, gentle love:
And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
Being now my steward, here upon your lips
I sign your *Quietus est.*[n] This you should have begged now;
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them too soon.
Ant. But for your brothers?
Duch. Do not think of them:

All discord without this circumference
Is only to be pitied, and not feared:
Yet, should they know it, time will easily
Scatter the tempest.
Ant. These words should be mine,
And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it
Would not have savoured flattery.
Duch. Kneel.

Enter CARIOLA

Ant. Ha!
Duch. Be not amazed, this woman's of my counsel:
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber
Per verba presenti [n] is absolute marriage.
Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian, which let violence
Never untwine!
Ant. And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
Be still in motion.
Duch. Quickening, and make
The like soft music.
Ant. That we may imitate the loving palms,
Best emblem of a peaceful marriage
That never bore fruit divided.
Duch. What can the church force more?
Ant. That fortune may not know an accident,
Either of joy, or sorrow, to divide
Our fixed wishes!
Duch. How can the church build faster?
We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church
That must but echo this. Maid, stand apart:
I now am blind.
Ant. What's your conceit in this?
Duch. I would have you lead your fortune by the hand
Unto your marriage bed:
(You speak in me this, for we now are one:)

We'll only lie, and talk together, and plot
T' appease my humorous kindred; and if you please,
Like the old tale in Alexander and Lodowick,[n]
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.
O, let me shroud my blushes in your bosom,
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets! [*Exeunt.*

Cari. Whether the spirit of greatness, or of woman
Reign most in her, I know not; but it shows
A fearful madness: I owe her much of pity. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND

SCENE I[n]

Enter BOSOLA *and* CASTRUCCIO

Bos. You say, you would fain be taken for an eminent courtier?

Cast. 'Tis the very main of my ambition.

Bos. Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for't already, and your night-cap expresses your ears sufficient largely. I would have you learn to twirl the strings of your band with a good grace, and in a set speech, at th' end of every sentence, to hum three or four times, or blow your nose till it smart again, to recover your memory. When you come to be a president in criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him; but if you frown upon him, and threaten him, let him be sure to scape the gallows. 13

Cast. I would be a very merry president.

Bos. Do not sup a' nights; 'twill beget you an admirable wit.

Cast. Rather it would make me have a good stomach to quarrel; for they say, your roaring boys[n] eat meat seldom, and that makes them so valiant. But how shall I know whether the people take me for an eminent fellow? 21

Bos. I will teach a trick to know it: give out you lie a-dying, and if you hear the common people curse you, be sure you are taken for one of the prime night-caps.[n]

Enter an Old Lady

You come from painting now?

Old Lady. From what?

Bos. Why, from your scurvy face-physic.[n] To behold thee not painted, inclines somewhat near a miracle: these in thy face here, were deep ruts, and foul sloughs, the last progress. There was a lady in France, that having had the smallpox, flayed the skin off her face, to make it more level; and whereas before she looked like a nutmeg-grater, after she resembled an abortive hedgehog.

Old Lady. Do you call this painting?

Bos. No, no, but you call't careening of an old morphewed lady, to make her disembogue again: there's rough-cast phrase to your plastic.

Old Lady. It seems you are well acquainted with my closet.

Bos. One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young children's ordure;[n] and all these for the face. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon,[n] taken from the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague, than kiss one of you fasting. Here are two of you, whose sin of your youth is the very patrimony of the physician; makes him renew his foot-cloth with the spring, and change his high-prized courtesan with the fall of the leaf. I do wonder you do not loathe yourselves. Observe my meditation now.

What thing is in this outward form of man
To be beloved? We account it ominous,
If nature do produce a colt, or lamb,
A fawn, or goat, in any limb resembling
A man, and fly from't as a prodigy.
Man stands amazed to see his deformity
In any other creature but himself.
But in our own flesh, though we bear diseases
Which have their true names only ta'en from beasts,
As the most ulcerous wolf and swinish measle,
Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,
And though continually we bear about us
A rotten and dead body, we delight

To hide it in rich tissue; all our fear,
Nay all our terror, is, lest our physician
Should put us in the ground, to be made sweet.
Your wife's gone to Rome: you two couple, and get you
To the wells at Lucca,[n] to recover your aches.
I have other work on foot. I observe our duchess
[*Exeunt* CASTRUCCIO *and the* Old Lady.
Is sick a-days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,
The fins of her eyelids look most teeming blue,
She wanes i' th' cheek, and waxes fat i' th' flank,
And, contrary to our Italian fashion,
Wears a loose-bodied gown; there's something in't.
I have a trick may chance discover it,
A pretty one: I have bought some apricocks,[n]
The first our spring yields —

Enter ANTONIO *and* DELIO

Delio. And so long since married!
You amaze me.
Ant. Let me seal your lips for ever:
For did I think, that anything but th' air
Could carry these words from you, I should wish
You had no breath at all. — Now, sir, in your contemplation?
You are studying to become a great wise fellow.
Bos. O, sir, the opinion of wisdom, is a foul tetter, that runs all over a man's body: if simplicity direct us to have no evil, it directs us to a happy being: for the subtlest folly proceeds from the subtlest wisdom: let me be simply honest.
Ant. I do understand your inside.
Bos. Do you so?
Ant. Because you would not seem to appear to th' world
Puffed up with your preferment, you continue
This out-of-fashion melancholy: leave it, leave it.

Bos. Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any compliment whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than I can reach: they are the gods that must ride on winged horses. A lawyer's mule, of a slow pace, will both suit my disposition and business: for, mark me, when a man's mind rides faster than his horse can gallop, they quickly both tire.

Ant. You would look up to heaven, but I think
The devil, that rules i' th' air, stands in your light.

Bos. O, sir, you are lord of the ascendant,[n] chief man with the duchess; a duke was your cousin-german removed. Say you were lineally descended from King Pepin, or he himself, what of this? search the heads of the greatest rivers in the world, you shall find them but bubbles of water. Some would think the souls of princes were brought forth by some more weighty cause, than those of meaner persons: they are deceived, there's the same hand to them; the like passions sway them; the same reason that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig, and undo his neighbours, makes them spoil a whole province, and batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

Enter Duchess *and* Ladies

Duch. Your arm, Antonio: do I not grow fat?
I am exceeding short-winded. Bosola,
I would have you, sir, provide for me a litter;
Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.

Bos. The duchess used one when she was great with child.

Duch. I think she did. Come hither, mend my ruff:[n]
Here, when? thou art such a tedious lady; and
Thy breath smells of lemon peels:[n] would thou hadst done!
Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am
So troubled with the mother.

Bos. [*Aside.*] I fear too much.

Duch. I have heard you say, that the French courtiers
Wear their hats on fore the king.
Ant. I have seen it.
Duch. In the presence?
Ant. Yes.
Duch. Why should not we bring up that fashion?
'Tis ceremony more than duty, that consists
In the removing of a piece of felt:
Be you the example of the rest o' th' court,
Put on your hat first.
Ant. You must pardon me:
I have seen, in colder countries than in France,
Nobles stand bare to th' prince; and the distinction
Methought showed reverently.
Bos. I have a present for your grace.
Duch. For me, sir?
Bos. Apricocks, madam.
Duch. O, sir, where are they?
I have heard of none to year.[n]
Bos. [*Aside.*] Good, her colour rises.
Duch. Indeed I thank you; they are wondrous fair ones:
What an unskilful fellow is our gardener!
We shall have none this month.
Bos. Will not your grace pare them?
Duch. No: they taste of musk, methinks; indeed they do.
Bos. I know not: yet I wish your grace had pared 'em.
Duch. Why?
Bos. I forgot to tell you, the knave gardener,
Only to raise his profit by them the sooner,
Did ripen them in horse-dung.
Duch. O, you jest. —
You shall judge: pray, taste one.
Ant. Indeed, madam,
I do not love the fruit.
Duch. Sir, you are loath
To rob us of our dainties: 'tis a delicate fruit;

They say they are restorative.
Bos. 'Tis a pretty
Art, this grafting.
Duch. 'Tis so: a bettering of nature.
Bos. To make a pippin grow upon a crab,
A damson on a black-thorn.—[*Aside.*] How greedily she eats them!
A whirlwind strike off these bawd farthingales!
For, but for that, and the loose-bodied gown,
I should have discovered apparently
The young springal cutting a caper in her belly.
Duch. I thank you, Bosola: they were right good ones,
If they do not make me sick.
Ant. How now, madam?
Duch. This green fruit and my stomach are not friends:
How they swell me!
Bos. [*Aside.*] Nay, you are too much swelled already.
Duch. O, I am in an extreme cold sweat!
Bos. I am very sorry. [*Exit.*
Duch. Lights to my chamber! O good Antonio,
I fear I am undone! [*Exeunt* Duchess *and* Ladies.
Delio. Lights there, lights!
Ant. O my most trusty Delio, we are lost!
I fear she's fallen in labour; and there's left
No time for her remove.
Delio. Have you prepared
Those ladies to attend her? and procured
That politic safe conveyance for the midwife,
Your duchess plotted?
Ant. I have.
Delio. Make use then of this forced occasion:
Give out that Bosola hath poisoned her
With these apricocks; that will give some colour
For her keeping close.
Ant. Fie, fie, the physicians
Will then flock to hër.
Delio. For that you may pretend

She'll use some prepared antidote of her own,
Lest the physicians should re-poison her.

Ant. I am lost in amazement: I know not what to think on't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter BOSOLA

Bos. So, so, there's no question but her techiness and most vulturous eating of the apricocks, are apparent signs of breeding.

Enter an Old Lady

Now?

Old Lady. I am in haste, sir.

Bos. There was a young waiting-woman, had a monstrous desire to see the glass-house[n] —

Old Lady. Nay, pray let me go.

Bos. And it was only to know what strange instrument it was, should swell up a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly.

Old Lady. I will hear no more of the glass-house. You are still abusing women?

Bos. Who, I? no, only, by the way, now and then, mention your frailties. The orange-tree bears ripe and green fruit and blossoms, altogether: and some of you give entertainment for pure love, but more, for more precious reward. The lusty spring smells well; but drooping autumn tastes well. If we have the same golden showers, that rained in the time of Jupiter the thunderer, you have the same Danäes still, to hold up their laps to receive them. Didst thou never study the mathematics?

Old Lady. What's that, sir?

Bos. Why, to know the trick how to make a many lines meet in one centre. Go, go, give your foster-daughters good counsel: tell them, that the devil takes

delight to hang at a woman's girdle, like a false rusty watch, that she cannot discern how the time passes.

[*Exit* Old Lady.

Enter ANTONIO, RODERIGO, DELIO, *and* GRISOLAN

Ant. Shut up the court-gates.

Rod. Why, sir? what's the danger?

Ant. Shut up the posterns presently, and call
All the officers o' th' court.

Gris. I shall instantly. [*Exit.*

Ant. Who keeps the key o' th' park-gate?

Rod. Forobosco.

Ant. Let him bring't presently.

Enter GRISOLAN *and* Servants

First Serv. O gentlemen o' th' court, the foulest treason!

Bos. [*Aside.*] If that these apricocks should be poisoned now,
Without my knowledge!.

Serv. There was taken even now a Switzer in the duchess' bedchamber —

Second Serv. A Switzer!

Serv. With a pistol in his great cod-piece.

Bos. Ha, ha, ha!

Serv. The cod-piece was the case for't.

Second Serv. There was a cunning traitor; who would have searched his cod-piece?

Serv. True, if he had kept out of the ladies' chambers: and all the moulds of his buttons were leaden bullets.

Second Serv. O wicked cannibal! a firelock in's cod-piece!

Serv. 'Twas a French plot, upon my life.

Second Serv. To see what the devil can do!

Ant. Are all the officers here?

Servants. We are.

Ant. Gentlemen,
We have lost much plate you know; and but this evening
Jewels, to the value of four thousand ducats,
Are missing in the duchess' cabinet.
Are the gates shut?
Serv. Yes.
Ant. Tis the duchess' pleasure
Each officer be locked into his chamber
Till the sun-rising; and to send the keys
Of all their chests, and of their outward doors
Into her bedchamber. She is very sick.
Rod. At her pleasure.
Ant. She entreats you tak't not ill: the innocent
Shall be more approved by it.
Bos. Gentlemen o' th' wood-yard, where's your Switzer now?
Serv. By this hand, 'twas credibly reported by one o' th' black guard.
[*Exeunt all except* ANTONIO *and* DELIO.
Delio. How fares it with the duchess?
Ant. She's exposed
Unto the worst of torture, pain and fear.
Delio. Speak to her all happy comfort.
Ant. How I do play the fool with mine own danger!
You are this night, dear friend, to post to Rome:
My life lies in your service.
Delio. Do not doubt me.
Ant. O, 'tis far from me! and yet fear presents me
Somewhat that looks like danger.
Delio. Believe it,
'Tis but the shadow of your fear, no more:
How superstitiously we mind our evils!
The throwing down salt, or crossing of a hare,
Bleeding at nose, the stumbling of a horse,
Or singing of a cricket, are of power
To daunt whole man in us. Sir, fare you well:

I wish you all the joys of a blest father;
And, for my faith, lay this unto your breast,
Old friends, like old swords, still are trusted best. [*Exit.*

Enter CARIOLA

Cari. Sir, you are the happy father of a son:
Your wife commends him to you.
Ant. Blessèd comfort!
For Heaven's sake tend her well: I'll presently
Go set a figure for's nativity.[n] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter BOSOLA, *with a dark lantern*

Bos. Sure I did hear a woman shriek: list, ha!
And the sound came, if I received it right,
From the duchess' lodgings. There's some stratagem
In the confining all our courtiers
To their several wards: I must have part of it;[n]
My intelligence will freeze else. List, again!
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl, that screamed so. Ha! Antonio!

Enter ANTONIO

Ant. I heard some noise. Who's there? what art thou? speak.
Bos. Antonio? put not your face nor body
To such a forced expression of fear:
I am Bosola, your friend.
Ant. Bosola!
This mole does undermine me — Heard you not
A noise even now?
Bos. From whence?
Ant. From the duchess' lodging.

Bos. Not I: did you?
Ant. I did, or else I dreamed.
Bos. Let's walk towards it.
Ant. No: it may be 'twas
But the rising of the wind.
Bos. Very likely:
Methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat.
You look wildly.
Ant. I have been setting a figure
For the duchess' jewels.
Bos. Ah, and how falls your question?
Do you find it radical?[n]
Ant. What's that to you?
'Tis rather to be questioned what design,
When all men were commanded to their lodgings,
Makes you a night-walker.
Bos. In sooth I'll tell you:
Now all the court's asleep, I thought the devil
Had least to do here; I came to say my prayers,
And if it do offend you I do so,
You are a fine courtier.
Ant. [*Aside.*] This fellow will undo me.—
You gave the duchess apricocks to-day:
Pray heaven they were not poisoned.
Bos. Poisoned! a Spanish fig
For the imputation.[n]
Ant. Traitors are ever confident,
Till they are discovered. There were jewels stol'n too:
In my conceit, none are to be suspected
More than yourself.
Bos. You are a false steward.
Ant. Saucy slave, I'll pull thee up by the roots.
Bos. May be the ruin will crush you to pieces.
Ant. You are an impudent snake indeed, sir.
Are you scarce warm,[n] and do you show your sting?
You libel well, sir.
Bos. No, sir: copy it out,

And I will set my hand to't.
Ant. My nose bleeds.[n]
One that were superstitious would count
This ominous, when it merely comes by chance:
Two letters, that are wrought[n] here for my name,
Are drowned in blood: mere accident. For you, sir,
I'll take order: [*Aside.*] i' th' morn you shall be safe—
'Tis that must colour her lying-in.—
Sir, this door you pass not:
I do not hold it fit that you come near
The duchess' lodgings, till you have quit yourself.—
[*Aside.*] The great are like the base, nay, they are the same,
When they seek shameful ways to avoid shame. [*Exit.*
Bos. Antonio hereabout did drop a paper.
Some of your help, false friend.[n] O, here it is:
What's here? a child's nativity[n] calculated!
The Duchess was delivered of a son, 'tween the hours twelve and one in the night, Anno Dom. 1504 (that's this year), *decimo nono Decembris* (that's this night), *taken according to the meridian of Malfi* (that's our Duchess: happy discovery!) *The lord of the first house being combust in the ascendant, signifies short life; and Mars being in a human sign, joined to the tail of the Dragon, in the eighth house, doth threaten a violent death. Cætera non scrutantur.*
Why, now 'tis most apparent: this precise fellow
Is the duchess' bawd—I have it to my wish!
This is a parcel of intelligency
Our courtiers were cased up for: it needs must follow,
That I must be committed, on pretence
Of poisoning her; which I'll endure, and laugh at.
If one could find the father now! but that
Time will discover. Old Castruccio
I' th' morning posts to Rome: by him I'll send
A letter, that shall make her brothers' galls
O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty way.

Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,
She's oft found witty, but is never wise. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV[n]

Enter Cardinal *and* JULIA

Card. Sit: thou art my best of wishes. Prithee tell me,
What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
Without thy husband?
Julia. Why, my lord, I told him
I came to visit an old anchorite
Here, for devotion.
Card. Thou art a witty false one;
I mean, to him.
Julia. You have prevailed with me
Beyond my strongest thoughts: I would not now
Find you inconstant.
Card. Do not put thyself
To such a voluntary torture, which proceeds
Out of your own guilt.
Julia. How, my lord?
Card. You fear
My constancy, because you have approved
Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.
Julia. Did you e'er find them?
Card. Sooth, generally; for women,
A man might strive to make glass malleable,
Ere he should make them fixed.
Julia. So, my lord.
Card. We had need go borrow that fantastic glass,
Invented by Galileo[n] the Florentine,
To view another spacious world i' th' moon,
And look to find a constant woman there.
Julia. This is very well, my lord.
Card. Why do you weep?
Are tears your justification? the self-same tears

Will fall into your husband's bosom, lady,
With a loud protestation that you love him
Above the world. Come, I'll love you wisely:
That's jealousy; since I am very certain
You cannot make me cuckold.
Julia. I'll go home
To my husband.
Card. You may thank me, lady:
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,
Bore you upon my fist, and showed you game,
And let you fly at it.[n] — I pray thee, kiss me. —
When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast watched
Like a tame elephant: — (still you are to thank me:) —
Thou hadst only kisses from him, and high feeding;
But what delight was that? 'twas just like one
That hath a little fingering on the lute,
Yet cannot tune it: — still you are to thank me.
Julia. You told me of a piteous wound i' th' heart,
And a sick liver, when you wooed me first,
And spake like one in physic.[n]
Card. Who's that? —

Enter Servant

Rest firm, for my affection to thee,
Lightning moves slow to't.
Serv. Madam, a gentleman,
That's come post from Malfi, desires to see you.
Card. Let him enter: I'll withdraw. [*Exit.*
Serv. He says,
Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome.
Most pitifully tired with riding post. [*Exit.*

Enter DELIO

Julia. Signior Delio! 'tis one of my old suitors.
Delio. I was bold to come and see you.

Julia. Sir, you are welcome.
Delio. Do you lie here?
Julia. Sure, your own experience
Will satisfy you, no: our Roman prelates
Do not keep lodging for ladies.
Delio. Very well:
I have brought you no commendations from your husband,
For I know none by him.
Julia. I hear he's come to Rome.
Delio. I never knew man and beast, of a horse and a knight,
So weary of each other; if he had had a good back,
He would have undertook to have borne his horse,
His breech was so pitifully sore.
Julia. Your laughter
Is my pity.[n]
Delio. Lady, I know not whether
You want money, but I have brought you some.
Julia. From my husband?
Delio. No, from mine own allowance.
Julia. I must hear the condition, ere I be bound to take it.
Delio. Look on't, 'tis gold; hath it not a fine colour?
Julia. I have a bird more beautiful.
Delio. Try the sound on't.
Julia. A lute-string far exceeds it:
It hath no smell, like cassia, or civet;
Nor is it physical,[n] though some fond doctors
Persuade us seeth't in cullises.[n] I'll tell you,
This is a creature bred by —

Enter Servant

Serv. Your husband's come,
Hath delivered a letter to the Duke of Calabria,
That to my thinking, hath put him out of his wits. [*Exit.*
Julia. Sir, you hear:

Pray let me know your business, and your suit,
As briefly as can be.
Delio. With good speed: I would wish you,
At such time as you are non-resident
With your husband, my mistress.
Julia. Sir, I'll go ask my husband if I shall,
And straight return your answer. [*Exit.*
Delio. Very fine.
Is this her wit, or honesty, that speaks thus?
I heard one say the duke was highly moved
With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear
Antonio is betrayed: how fearfully
Shows his ambition now! unfortunate fortune!
They pass through whirlpools, and deep woes to shun,
Who the event weigh, ere the action's done. [*Exit.*

SCENE V[n]

Enter Cardinal, *and* FERDINAND *with a letter*

Ferd. I have this night digged up a mandrake.
Card. Say you?
Ferd. And I am grown mad with't.
Card. What's the prodigy?
Ferd. Read there, a sister damned; she's loose i' th' hilts;[n]
Grown a notorious strumpet.
Card. Speak lower.
Ferd. Lower!
Rogues do not whisper't now, but seek to publish't
(As servants do the bounty of their lords)
Aloud; and with a covetous searching eye,
To mark who note them. O, confusion seize her!
She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her turn,
And more secure conveyances for lust,
Than towns of garrison for service.
Card. Is't possible?

Can this be certain?
Ferd. Rhubarb, O, for rhubarb,
To purge this choler! here's the cursèd day
To prompt my memory; and here't shall stick
Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge
To wipe it out.
Card. Why do you make yourself
So wild a tempest?
Ferd. Would I could be one,
That I might toss her palace 'bout her ears,
Root up her goodly forests, blast her meads,
And lay her general territory as waste,
As she hath done her honours.
Card. Shall our blood,
The royal blood of Arragon and Castile,
Be thus attainted?
Ferd. Apply desperate physic:
We must not now use balsamum, but fire,
The smarting cupping-glass, for that's the mean
To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.
There is a kind of pity in mine eye,
I'll give it to my handkerchief; and now 'tis here
I'll bequeath this to her bastard.
Card. What to do?
Ferd. Why, to make soft lint for his mother's wounds,
When I have hewed her to pieces.
Card. Cursèd creature!
Unequal nature, to place women's hearts
So far upon the left side!
Ferd. Foolish men,
That e'er will trust their honour in a bark
Made of so slight weak bulrush as is woman,
Apt every minute to sink it!
Card. Thus ignorance, when it hath purchased honour,
It cannot wield it.
Ferd. Methinks I see her laughing:—
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat, quickly,

Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.
Card. With whom?
Ferd. Happily with some strong-thighed bargeman,
Or one o' th' wood-yard, that can quoit the sledge,
Or toss the bar, or else some lovely squire
That carries coals up to her privy lodgings.
Card. You fly beyond your reason.
Ferd. Go to, mistress!
'Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my wildfire,
But your whore's blood.
Card. How idly shows this rage, which carries you,
As men conveyed by witches through the air,
On violent whirlwinds! this intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection.
Ferd. Have not you
My palsy?
Card. Yes; I can be angry
Without this rupture: there is not in nature
A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,
As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.
You have divers men, who never yet expressed
Their strong desire of rest, but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself
In tune.
Ferd. So: I will only study to seem
The thing I am not. I could kill her now,
In you, or in myself; for I do think
It is some sin in us, heaven doth revenge
By her.
Card. Are you stark mad?
Ferd. I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal-pit with the ventage stopped,
That their cursed smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in, in pitch or sulphur,

Wrap them in't, and then light them like a match;
Or else to boil their bastard to a cullis
And give't his lecherous father, to renew
The sin of his back.
Card. I'll leave you.
Ferd. Nay, I have done.
I am confident, had I been damned in hell,
And should have heard of this, it would have put me
Into a cold sweat. In, in, I'll go sleep.
Till I know who leaps my sister, I'll not stir:
That known, I'll find scorpions to string my whips,
And fix her in a general eclipse.[n] [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

SCENE I[n]

Enter ANTONIO *and* DELIO

Ant. Our noble friend, my most belovèd Delio!
O, you have been a stranger long at court:
Came you along with the lord Ferdinand?
Delio. I did, sir: and how fares your noble duchess?
Ant. Right fortunately well: she's an excellent
Feeder of pedigrees; since you last saw her,
She hath had two children more,[n] a son and daughter.
Delio. Methinks 'twas yesterday; let me but wink,
And not behold your face — which to mine eye
Is somewhat leaner — verily I should dream
It were within this half hour.
Ant. You have not been in law, friend Delio,
Nor in prison, nor a suitor at the court,
Nor begged the reversion of some great man's place,[n]
Nor troubled with an old wife, which doth make
Your time so insensibly hasten.
Delio. Pray, sir, tell me,
Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear
Of the lord Cardinal?
Ant. I fear it hath:
The lord Ferdinand, that's newly come to court,
Doth bear himself right dangerously.
Delio. Pray, why?
Ant. He is so quiet, that he seems to sleep
The tempest out, as dormice do in winter:
Those houses that are haunted, are most still
Till the devil be up.
Delio. What say the common people?

Ant. The common rabble do directly say
She is a strumpet.
Delio. And your graver heads,
Which would be politic, what censure they?
Ant. They do observe, I grow to infinite purchase,
The left hand way; and all suppose the duchess
Would amend it, if she could: for, say they,
Great princes, though they grudge their officers
Should have such large and unconfinèd means
To get wealth under them, will not complain,
Lest thereby they should make them odious
Unto the people; for other obligation
Of love or marriage, between her and me,
They never dream of.
Delio. The lord Ferdinand
Is going to bed.

Enter Duchess, FERDINAND, *and* BOSOLA

Ferd. I'll instantly to bed,
For I am weary. I am to bespeak
A husband for you.
Duch. For me, sir! pray who is't?
Ferd. The great Count Malateste.
Duch. Fie upon him:
A count! he's a mere stick of sugar-candy;
You may look quite thorough him. When I choose
A husband, I will marry for your honour.
Ferd. You shall do well in't. How is't, worthy Antonio?
Duch. But, sir, I am to have private conference with you
About a scandalous report is spread
Touching mine honour.
Ferd. Let me be ever deaf to't:
One of Pasquil's paper-bullets,[n] court-calumny,
A pestilent air, which princes' palaces

Are seldom purged of. Yet, say that it were true,
I pour it in your bosom: my fixed love
Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay, deny
Faults, were they apparent in you. Go, be safe
In your own innocency.
Duch. O blessed comfort!
This deadly air is purged.
[*Exeunt all but* FERDINAND *and* BOSOLA.
Ferd. Her guilt treads on
Hot burning coulters.[n] Now, Bosola,
How thrives our intelligence?
Bos. Sir, uncertainly:
'Tis rumoured she hath had three bastards, but
By whom, we may go read i' th' stars.
Ferd. Why some
Hold opinion, all things are written there.
Bos. Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.
I do suspect, there hath been some sorcery
Used on the duchess.
Ferd. Sorcery! to what purpose?
Bos. To make her dote on some desertless fellow,
She shames to acknowledge.
Ferd. Can your faith give way
To think there's power in potions, or in charms,
To make us love whether we will or no?
Bos. Most certainly.
Ferd. Away, these are mere gulleries, horrid things,
Invented by some cheating mountebanks,
To abuse us. Do you think that herbs, or charms,
Can force the will? Some trials have been made
In this foolish practice, but the ingredients
Were lenitive poisons, such as are of force
To make the patient mad; and straight the witch
Swears by equivocation they are in love.
The witchcraft lies in her rank blood. This night
I will force confession from her. You told me
You had got, within these two days, a false key

Into her bedchamber.
Bos. I have.
Ferd. As I would wish.
Bos. What do you intend to do?
Ferd. Can you guess?
Bos. No.
Ferd. Do not ask then:
He that can compass me, and know my drifts,
May say he hath put a girdle 'bout the world,
And sounded all her quicksands.
Bos. I do not
Think so.
Ferd. What do you think, then, pray?
Bos. That you
Are your own chronicle too much, and grossly
Flatter yourself.
Ferd. Give me thy hand; I thank thee:
I never gave pension but to flatterers,
Till I entertained thee. Farewell.
That friend a great man's ruin strongly checks,
Who rails into his belief all his defects. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter Duchess, ANTONIO, *and* CARIOLA

Duch. Bring me the casket hither, and the glass.
You get no lodging here to night, my lord.
Ant. Indeed, I must persuade one.
Duch. Very good:
I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom,
That noblemen shall come with cap and knee,
To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.
Ant. I must lie here.
Duch. Must! you are a lord of misrule.[n]
Ant. Indeed, my rule is only in the night.
Duch. To what use will you put me?

Ant. We'll sleep together.
Duch. Alas, what pleasure can two lovers find in sleep!
Cari. My lord, I lie with her often; and I know
She'll much disquiet you.
Ant. See, you are complained of.
Cari. For she's the sprawlingest bedfellow.
Ant. I shall like her the better for that.
Cari. Sir, shall I ask you a question?
Ant. Aye, pray thee, Cariola.
Cari. Wherefore still, when you lie with my lady,
Do you rise so early?
Ant. Labouring men
Count the clock oftenest, Cariola;
Are glad when their task's ended.
Duch. I'll stop your mouth.
Ant. Nay, that's but one; Venus had two soft doves
To draw her chariot; I must have another.
When wilt thou marry, Cariola?
Cari. Never, my lord.
Ant. O, fie upon this single life! forego it.
We read how Daphne, for her peevish flight,
Became a fruitless bay-tree; Syrinx turned
To the pale empty reed; Anaxarete[n]
Was frozen into marble: whereas those
Which married, or proved kind unto their friends,
Were, by a gracious influence, transhaped
Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry,
Became flowers, precious stones, or eminent stars.
Cari. This is a vain poetry; but I pray you tell me,
If there were proposed me, wisdom, riches, and beauty,
In three several young men, which should I choose?
Ant. 'Tis a hard question: this was Paris' case,
And he was blind in't, and there was great cause;
For how was't possible he could judge right,
Having three amorous goddesses in view,
And they stark naked? 'twas a motion[n]
Were able to benight the apprehension

Of the severest counsellor of Europe.
Now I look on both your faces so well formed,
It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.
Cari. What is't?
Ant. I do wonder why hard-favoured ladies,
For the most part, keep worse-favoured waiting-women
To attend them, and cannot endure fair ones.
Duch. O, that's soon answered.
Did you ever in your life know an ill painter
Desire to have his dwelling next door to the shop
Of an excellent picture-maker? 'twould disgrace
His face-making, and undo him. I prithee,
When were we so merry? My hair tangles.
Ant. Pray thee, Cariola, let's steal forth the room,
And let her talk to herself: I have divers times
Served her the like, when she hath chafed extremely.
I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola. [*Exeunt.*
Duch. Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change?
When I wax grey, I shall have all the court
Powder their hair with arras to be like me.
You have cause to love me; I entered you into my heart

Enter FERDINAND *unseen*

Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.
We shall one day have my brothers take you napping:
Methinks his presence, being now at court,
Should make you keep your own bed; but you'll say
Love mixed with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,
You shall get no more children till my brothers
Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue?
'Tis welcome: [n]
For know, whether I am doomed to live or die,
I can do both like a prince.
[FERDINAND *gives her a poniard.*
Ferd. Die then quickly.
Virtue, where art thou hid? what hideous thing

Is it that doth eclipse thee?
Duch. Pray, sir, hear me.
Ferd. Or is it true thou art but a bare name,
And no essential thing?
Duch. Sir —
Ferd. Do not speak.
Duch. No, sir:
I will plant my soul in mine ears, to hear you.
Ferd. O most imperfect light of human reason,
That mak'st us so unhappy to foresee
What we can least prevent! Pursue thy wishes,
And glory in them: there's in shame no comfort,
But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.
Duch. I pray, sir, hear me: I am married.
Ferd. So!
Duch. Happily, not to your liking: but for that,
Alas, your shears do come untimely now
To clip the bird's wings, that's already flown!
Will you see my husband?
Ferd. Yes, if I could change
Eyes with a basilisk.[n]
Duch. Sure, you came hither
By his confederacy.
Ferd. The howling of a wolf
Is music to thee, screech-owl: prithee, peace.
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoyed my sister,
For I am sure thou hears't me, for thine own sake
Let me not know thee. I came hither prepared
To work thy discovery;[n] yet am now persuaded
It would beget such violent effects
As would damn us both. I would not for ten millions
I had beheld thee: therefore use all means
I never may have knowledge of thy name;
Enjoy thy lust still, and a wretched life,
On that condition. And for thee, vile woman,
If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old
In thy embracements, I would have thee build

Such a room for him as our anchorites
To holier use inhabit. Let not the sun
Shine on him, till he's dead; let dogs and monkeys
Only converse with him, and such dumb things
To whom nature denies use to sound his name;
Do not keep a paraquito, lest she learn it;
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue
Lest it bewray him.
Duch. Why might not I marry?
I have not gone about in this to create
Any new world or custom.
Ferd. Thou art undone;
And thou hast ta'en that massy sheet of lead
That hid thy husband's bones, and folded it
About my heart.
Duch. Mine bleeds for't!
Ferd. Thine! thy heart!
What should I name't, unless a hollow bullet
Filled with unquenchable wildfire?
Duch. You are in this
Too strict; and were you not my princely brother,
I would say, too wilful: my reputation
Is safe.
Ferd. Dost thou know what reputation is?
I'll tell thee, — to small purpose, since th' instruction
Comes now too late.
Upon a time Reputation, Love, and Death
Would travel o'er the world; and it was concluded
That they should part, and take three several ways.
Death told them, they should find him in great battles,
Or cities plagued with plagues: Love gives them counsel
To inquire for him 'mongst unambitious shepherds,
Where dowries were not talked of, and sometimes
'Mongst quiet kindred, that had nothing left
By their dead parents: 'Stay,' quoth Reputation,
'Do not forsake me; for it is my nature
If once I part *from any* man I meet,

I am never found again.' And so, for you;
You have shook hands with Reputation,
And made him invisible. So fare you well:
I will never see you more.
Duch. Why should only I,
Of all the other princes of the world,
Be cased up, like a holy relic? I have youth,
And a little beauty.
Ferd. So you have some virgins
That are witches.[n] I will never see thee more. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO *with a pistol, and* CARIOLA

Duch. You saw this apparition?
Ant. Yes: we are
Betrayed. How came he hither? I should turn
This to thee, for that. [*To* CARIOLA.
Cari. Pray, sir, do; and when
That you have cleft my heart, you shall read there
Mine innocence.
Duch. That gallery gave him entrance.
Ant. I would this terrible thing would come again,
That, standing on my guard, I might relate
My warrantable love! Ha! what means this?
[*She shows the poniard.*
Duch. He left this with me.
Ant. And it seems, did wish
You would use it on yourself.
Duch. His action seemed
To intend so much.
Ant. This hath a handle to't,
As well as a point: turn it towards him, and
So fasten the keen edge in his rank gall.
How now? who knocks? more earthquakes!
Duch. I stand
As if a mine beneath my feet were ready
To be blown up.

Cari. 'Tis Bosola.
Duch. Away!
O misery! methinks unjust actions
Should wear these masks and curtains, and not we.
You must instantly part hence: I have fashioned it already. [*Exit* ANTONIO.

Enter BOSOLA

Bos. The duke your brother is ta'en up in a whirlwind;
Hath took horse, and's rid post to Rome.
Duch. So late!
Bos. He told me, as he mounted into th' saddle,
You were undone.
Duch. Indeed, I am very near it.
Bos. What's the matter?
Duch. Antonio, the master of our household,
Hath dealt so falsely with me in's accounts:
My brother stood engaged with me for money
Ta'en up of certain Neapolitan Jews,
And Antonio lets the bonds be forfeit.
Bos. Strange! — this is cunning!
Duch. And hereupon
My brother's bills at Naples are protested
Against. Call up our officers.
Bos. I shall. [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO

Duch. The place that you must fly to, is Ancona:
Hire a house there; I'll send after you
My treasure, and my jewels. Our weak safety
Runs upon enginous wheels: [n] short syllables,
Must stand for periods. I must now accuse you
Of such a feignèd crime, as Tasso calls
Magnanima menzogna, a noble lie,
'Cause it must shield our honours: — hark, they are coming!

Enter BOSOLA *and* Gentlemen

Ant. Will your grace hear me?

Duch. I have got well by you; you have yielded me
A million of loss: I am like to inherit
The people's curses for your stewardship.
You had the trick in audit-time to be sick,
Till I had signed your *quietus;* and that cured you
Without help of a doctor. Gentlemen,
I would have this man be an example to you all,
So shall you hold my favour; I pray, let him;[n]
For h'as done that, alas! you would not think of,
And, because I intend to be rid of him,
I mean not to publish. Use your fortune elsewhere.

Ant. I am strongly armed to brook my overthrow:
As commonly men bear with a hard year,
I will not blame the cause on't; but do think
The necessity of my malevolent star
Procures this, not her humour. O, the inconstant
And rotten ground of service! you may see,
'Tis even like him, that in a winter night,
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,
A-loath to part from't; yet parts thence as cold,
As when he first sat down.

Duch. We do confiscate
Towards the satisfying of your accounts,
All that you have.

Ant. I am all yours; and 'tis very fit
All mine should be so.

Duch. So, sir, you have your pass.

Ant. You may see, gentlemen, what it is to serve
A prince with body and soul. [*Exit.*

Bos. Here's an example for extortion: what moisture is drawn out of the sea, when foul weather comes, pours down, and runs into the sea again.

Duch. I would know what are your opinions
Of this Antonio.

Second Off. He could not abide to see a pig's head gaping:[n] I thought your grace would find him a Jew.

Third Off. I would you had been his officer, for your own sake.

Fourth Off. You would have had more money.

First Off. He stopped his ears with black wool, and to those came to him for money, said he was thick of hearing.

Second Off. Some said he was an hermaphrodite, for he could not abide a woman.

Fourth Off. How scurvy proud he would look, when the treasury was full! well, let him go.

First Off. Yes, and the chippings of the buttery[n] fly after him, to scour his gold chain. [*Exeunt.*

Duch. Leave us. What do you think of these?

Bos. That these are rogues, that in's prosperity,
But to have waited on his fortune, could have wished
His dirty stirrup rivetted through their noses;[n]
And followed after's mule, like a bear in a ring.
Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust;
Made their first-born intelligencers; thought none happy
But such as were born under his blessed planet,
And wore his livery: and do these lice drop off now?
Well, never look to have the like again:
He hath left a sort of flattering rogues behind him;
Their doom must follow. Princes pay flatterers
In their own money: flatterers dissemble their vices,
And they dissemble their lies; that's justice.
Alas, poor gentleman!

Duch. Poor! he hath amply filled his coffers.

Bos. Sure, he was too honest. Plutus, the god of riches,
When he's sent by Jupiter to any man,
He goes limping, to signify that wealth
That comes on God's name, comes slowly; but when he's sent
On the devil's errand, he rides post and comes in by scuttles.

Let me show you, what a most unvalued jewel
You have in a wanton humour thrown away,
To bless the man shall find him. He was an excellent
Courtier, and most faithful; a soldier, that thought it
As beastly to know his own value too little,
As devilish to acknowledge it too much.
Both his virtue and form deserved a far better fortune.
His discourse rather delighted to judge itself, than show itself:
His breast was filled with all perfection,
And yet it seemed a private whispering-room,
It made so little noise of't.
Duch. But he was basely descended.
Bos. Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,
Rather to examine men's pedigrees, than virtues?
You shall want him:
For know an honest statesman to a prince,
Is like a cedar planted by a spring:
The spring bathes the tree's root, the grateful tree
Rewards it with his shadow — you have not done so.
I would sooner swim to the Bermoothes[n] on
Two politicians' rotten bladders, tied
Together with an intelligencer's heart-string,
Than depend on so changeable a prince's favour.
Fare thee well, Antonio! since the malice of the world
Would needs down with thee, it cannot be said yet
That any ill happened unto thee,
Considering thy fall was accompanied with virtue.
Duch. O, you render me excellent music!
Bos. Say you?
Duch. This good one that you speak of, is my husband.
Bos. Do I not dream? can this ambitious age
Have so much goodness in't, as to prefer
A man merely for worth, without these shadows
Of wealth and painted honours? possible?
Duch. I have had three children by him.
Bos. Fortunate lady!

For you have made your private nuptial bed
The humble and fair seminary of peace.
No question but many an unbeneficed scholar
Shall pray for you for this deed, and rejoice
That some preferment in the world can yet
Arise from merit. The virgins of your land
That have no dowries, shall hope your example
Will raise them to rich husbands. Should you want
Soldiers, 'twould make the very Turks and Moors
Turn Christians, and serve you for this act.
Last, the neglected poets of your time,
In honour of this trophy of a man,
Raised by that curious engine, your white hand,
Shall thank you, in your grave, for't; and make that
More reverend than all the cabinets
Of living princes. For Antonio,
His fame shall likewise flow from many a pen,
When heralds shall want coats to sell to men.
Duch. As I taste comfort in this friendly speech,
So would I find concealment.
Bos. O, the secret of my prince,
Which I will wear on th' inside of my heart!
Duch. You shall take charge of all my coin and jewels,
And follow him; for he retires himself
To Ancona.
Bos. So.
Duch. Whither, within few days,
I mean to follow thee.
Bos. Let me think:
I would wish your grace to feign a pilgrimage
To our lady of Loretto,[n] scarce seven leagues
From fair Ancona; so may you depart
Your country with more honour, and your flight
Will seem a princely progress, retaining
Your usual train about you.
Duch. Sir, your direction
Shall lead me by the hand.

Cari. In my opinion, she were better progress
To the baths at Lucca, or go visit the Spa[n]
In Germany; for, if you will believe me,
I do not like this jesting with religion,
This feigned pilgrimage.
Duch. Thou art a superstitious fool!
Prepare us instantly for our departure.
Past sorrows, let us moderately lament them,
For those to come, seek wisely to prevent them.
[*Exeunt* Duchess *and* CARIOLA.
Bos. A politician is the devil's quilted anvil;
He fashions all sins on him, and the blows
Are never heard: he may work in a lady's chamber,
As here for proof. What rests but I reveal
All to my lord? O, this base quality
Of intelligencer! why, every quality i'th' world
Prefers but gain or commendation.
Now, for this act I am certain to be raised,
And men that paint weeds to the life, are praised. [*Exit.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter Cardinal, FERDINAND, MALATESTE, PESCARA, DELIO *and* SILVIO

Card. Must we turn soldier then?
Mal. The emperor,
Hearing your worth that way, ere you attained
This reverend garment, joins you in commission
With the right fortunate soldier, the Marquis of Pescara,
And the famous Lannoy.
Card. He that had the honour
Of taking the French king prisoner?
Mal. The same.
Here's a plot drawn for a new fortification
At Naples. [*Exit.*

Ferd. This great Count Malateste, I perceive,
Hath got employment?
Delio. No employment, my lord;
A marginal note in the muster-book, that he is
A voluntary lord.[n]
Ferd. He's no soldier.
Delio. He has worn gunpowder in's hollow tooth, for the toothache.
Sil. He comes to the leaguer with a full intent
To eat fresh beef and garlic, means to stay
Till the scent be gone, and straight return to court.
Delio. He hath read all the late service,
As the City Chronicle[n] relates it:
And keeps two pewterers going,[n] only to express
Battles in model.
Sil. Then he'll fight by the book.
Delio. By the almanac, I think,
To choose good days, and shun the critical;
That's his mistress' scarf.
Sil. Yes, he protests
He would do much for that taffeta.
Delio. I think he would run away from a battle,
To save it from taking prisoner.[n]
Sil. He is horribly afraid
Gunpowder will spoil the perfume on't.
Delio. I saw a Dutchman break his pate once
For calling him pot-gun; he made his head
Have a bore in't like a musket.
Sil. I would he had made a touchhole to't.
He is indeed a guarded sumpter-cloth,
Only for the remove of the court.

Enter BOSOLA

Pes. Bosola arrived! what should be the business?
Some falling out amongst the cardinals.
These factions amongst great men, they are like

Foxes, when their heads are divided,
They carry fire in their tails,[n] and all the country
About them goes to wrack for't.
Sil. What's that Bosola?
Delio. I knew him in Padua, — a fantastical scholar, like such who study how many knots was in Hercules' club, of what colour Achilles' beard was, or whether Hector were not troubled with the toothache. He hath studied himself half blear-eyed to know the true symmetry of Cæsar's nose by a shoeing-horn; and this he did to gain the name of a speculative man.
Pes. Mark Prince Ferdinand:
A very salamander lives in's eye,
To mock the eager violence of fire.[n]
Sil. That Cardinal hath made more bad faces with his oppression than ever Michael Angelo made good ones: he lifts up's nose, like a foul porpoise before a storm.
Pes. The lord Ferdinand laughs.
Delio. Like a deadly cannon,
That lightens ere it smokes.
Pes. These are your true pangs of death,
The pangs of life, that struggle with great statesmen.
Delio. In such a deformed silence, witches whisper Their charms.
Card. Doth she make religion her riding-hood
To keep her from the sun and tempest?
Ferd. That, that damns her. Methinks her fault and beauty,
Blended together, show like leprosy,
The whiter, the fouler. I make it a question
Whether her beggarly brats were ever christened.
Card. I will instantly solicit the state of Ancona
To have them banished.
Ferd. You are for Loretto:
I shall not be at your ceremony; fare you well.
Write to the Duke of Malfi, my young nephew
She had by her first husband, and acquaint him

With's mother's honesty.
Bos. I will.
Ferd. Antonio!
A slave that only smelled of ink and counters,
And never in's life looked like a gentleman,
But in the audit-time. Go, go presently,
Draw me out an hundred and fifty of our horse,
And meet me at the fort-bridge. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Enter Two Pilgrims *to the Shrine of our Lady of Loretto*

First Pil. I have not seen a goodlier shrine than this,
Yet I have visited many.
Second Pil. The Cardinal of Arragon
Is this day to resign his cardinal's hat:
His sister duchess likewise is arrived
To pay her vow of pilgrimage. I expect
A noble ceremony.
First Pil. No question. They come.
[*Here the ceremony of the* Cardinal's *instalment, in the habit of a soldier, performed in delivering up his cross, hat, robes, and ring, at the shrine, and investing him with sword, helmet, shield, and spurs: then* ANTONIO, *the* Duchess, *and their children, having presented themselves at the shrine, are, by a form of banishment in dumb show expressed towards them by the* Cardinal *and the state of Ancona, banished. During all which ceremony, this ditty is sung, to very solemn music, by divers churchmen, and then exeunt:*

Arms and honours deck thy story,[11]
To thy fame's eternal glory:
Adverse fortune ever fly thee;
No disastrous fate come nigh thee.

I alone will sing thy praises,
Whom to honour virtue raises;
And thy study, that divine is,
Bent to martial discipline is.
Lay aside all those robes lie by thee;
Crown thy arts with arms, they'll beautify thee.

O worthy of worthiest name, adorned in this manner,
Lead bravely thy forces on, under war's warlike banner!
O, may'st thou prove fortunate in all martial courses!
Guide thou still by skill in arts and forces:
Victory attend thee nigh, whilst fame sings loud thy powers;
Triumphant conquest crown thy head, and blessings pour down showers!

First Pil. Here's a strange turn of state! who would have thought
So great a lady would have matched herself
Unto so mean a person? yet the Cardinal
Bears him much too cruel.
Second Pil. They are banished.
First Pil. But I would ask what power hath this state
Of Ancona, to determine of a free prince?
Second Pil. They are a free state, sir, and her brother showed
How that the Pope, forehearing of her looseness,
Hath seized into the protection of the church
The dukedom, which she held as dowager.
First Pil. But by what justice?
Second Pil. Sure I think by none,
Only her brother's instigation.
First Pil. What was it with such violence he took
Off from her finger?
Second Pil. 'Twas her wedding ring,

Which he vowed shortly he would sacrifice
To his revenge.
First Pil. Alas, Antonio!
If that a man be thrust into a well,
No matter who sets hand to't, his own weight
Will bring him sooner to th' bottom. Come, let's hence
Fortune makes this conclusion general,
All things do help th' unhappy man to fall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V[ii]

Enter Duchess, ANTONIO, Children, CARIOLA, *and* Servants

Duch. Banished Ancona!
Ant. Yes, you see what power
Lightens in great men's breath.
Duch. Is all our train
Shrunk to this poor remainder?
Ant. These poor men,
Which have got little in your service, vow
To take your fortune: but your wiser buntings,
Now they are fledged, are gone.
Duch. They have done wisely.
This puts me in mind of death: physicians thus,
With their hands full of money, used to give o'er
Their patients.
Ant. Right the fashion of the world:
From decayed fortunes every flatterer shrinks;
Men cease to build where the foundation sinks.
Duch. I had a very strange dream to-night.
Ant. What was't?
Duch. Methought I wore my coronet of state,
And on a sudden all the diamonds
Were changed to pearls.
Ant. My interpretation

Is, you'll weep shortly; for to me the pearls
Do signify your tears.
Duch. The birds that live i'th' field
On the wild benefit of nature, live
Happier than we; for they may choose their mates,
And carol their sweet pleasures to the spring.

Enter BOSOLA *with a letter*

Bos. You are happily o'erta'en.
Duch. From my brother?
Bos. Yes, from the lord Ferdinand, your brother,
All love and safety.
Duch. Thou dost blanch mischief,
Would'st make it white. See, see, like to calm weather
At sea before a tempest, false hearts speak fair
To those they intend most mischief. [*Reads the letter.*
Send Antonio to me; I want his head in a business.
A politic equivocation!
He doth not want your counsel, but your head;
That is, he cannot sleep till you be dead.
And here's another pitfall that's strewed o'er
With roses; mark it, 'tis a cunning one;
I stand engaged for your husband, for several debts at Naples: let not that trouble him; I had rather have his heart than his money:
And I believe so too.
Bos. What do you believe?
Duch. That he so much distrusts my husband's love,
He will by no means believe his heart is with him,
Until he see it: the devil is not cunning enough
To circumvent us in riddles.
Bos. Will you reject that noble and free league
Of amity and love, which I present you?
Duch. Their league is like that of some politic kings,
Only to make themselves of strength and power
To be our after-ruin: tell them so.

Bos. And what from you?
Ant. Thus tell him; I will not come.
Bos. And what of this?[n]
Ant. My brothers have dispersed
Bloodhounds abroad; which till I hear are muzzled,
No truce, though hatched with ne'er such politic skill,
Is safe, that hangs upon our enemies' will.
I'll not come at them.
Bos. This proclaims your breeding:
Every small thing draws a base mind to fear,
As the adamant draws iron. Fare you well, sir:
You shall shortly hear from 's. [*Exit.*
Duch. I suspect some ambush:
Therefore by all my love I do conjure you
To take your eldest son, and fly towards Milan.
Let us not venture all this poor remainder,
In one unlucky bottom.
Ant. You counsel safely.
Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part,
Heaven hath a hand in't: but no otherwise,
Than as some curious artist takes in sunder
A clock, or watch, when it is out of frame,[n]
To bring't in better order.
Duch. I know not which is best,
To see you dead, or part with you. Farewell, boy:
Thou art happy, that thou hast not understanding
To know thy misery; for all our wit
And reading brings us to a truer sense
Of sorrow. In the eternal church, sir,
I do hope we shall not part thus.
Ant. O, be of comfort!
Make patience a noble fortitude,
And think not how unkindly we are used:
Man, like to cassia, is proved best, being bruised.
Duch. Must I, like to a slave-born Russian,
Account it praise to suffer tyranny?
And yet, O Heaven, thy heavy hand is in't!

I have seen my little boy oft scourge his top,
And compared myself to't: nought made me e'er
Go right but Heaven's scourge-stick.
Ant. Do not weep:
Heaven fashioned us of nothing; and we strive
To bring ourselves to nothing. Farewell, Cariola,
And thy sweet armful. If I do never see thee more,
Be a good mother to your little ones,
And save them from the tiger: fare you well.
Duch. Let me look upon you once more, for that speech
Came from a dying father: your kiss is colder
Than that I have seen an holy anchorite
Give to a dead man's skull.
Ant. My heart is turned to a heavy lump of lead,
With which I sound my danger: fare you well. [*Exit.*
Duch. My laurel is all withered.
Cari. Look, madam, what a troop of armèd men
Make toward us.

Enter BOSOLA *and* Soldiers, *with vizards*

Duch. O, they are very welcome!
When fortune's wheel is overcharged with princes,
The weight makes it move swift: I would have my ruin
Be sudden. I am your adventure, am I not?
Bos. You are: you must see your husband no more.
Duch. What devil art thou, that counterfeits Heaven's thunder?
Bos. Is that terrible? I would have you tell me whether
Is that note worse that frights the silly birds
Out of the corn, or that which doth allure them
To the nets? you have hearkened to the last too much.
Duch. O misery! like to a rusty o'ercharged cannon,
Shall I never fly in pieces? Come, to what prison?
Bos. To none.
Duch. Whither, then?

Bos. To your palace.
Duch. I have heard
That Charon's boat serves to convey all o'er
The dismal lake, but brings none back again.
Bos. Your brothers mean you safety and pity.
Duch. Pity!
With such a pity men preserve alive
Pheasants and quails, when they are not fat enough
To be eaten.
Bos. These are your children?
Duch. Yes.
Bos. Can they prattle?
Duch. No:
But I intend, since they were born accursed,
Curses shall be their first language.
Bos. Fie, madam,
Forget this base, low fellow.
Duch. Were I a man,
I'd beat that counterfeit face[n] into thy other.
Bos. One of no birth.
Duch. Say that he was born mean,
Man is most happy when's own actions
Be arguments and examples of his virtue.
Bos. A barren, beggarly virtue.
Duch. I prithee who is greatest? can you tell?
Sad tales befit my woe: I'll tell you one.
A salmon, as she swam unto the sea,
Met with a dog-fish, who encounters her
With this rough language: Why art thou so bold
To mix thyself with our high state of floods,
Being no eminent courtier, but one
That for the calmest, and fresh time o'th' year
Dost live in shallow rivers, rank'st thyself
With silly smelts and shrimps? and darest thou
Pass by our dog-ship without reverence?
O, quoth the salmon, sister, be at peace:
Thank *Jupiter*, we both have passed the net!

Our value never can be truly known,
Till in the fisher's basket we be shown:
I' th' market then my price may be the higher,
Even when I am nearest to the cook and fire.
So to great men the moral may be stretched;
Men oft are valued high, when th' are most wretched.
But come, whither you please. I am armed 'gainst misery;
Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will:
There's no deep valley but near some great hill.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH

SCENE I[a]

Enter FERDINAND *and* BOSOLA

Ferd. How doth our sister duchess bear herself
In her imprisonment?
Bos. Nobly: I'll describe her.
She's sad, as one long used to't, and she seems
Rather to welcome the end of misery,
Than shun it; a behaviour so noble,
As gives a majesty to adversity:
You may discern the shape of loveliness
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles:
She will muse for hours together; and her silence,
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.
Ferd. Her melancholy seems to be fortified
With a strange disdain.
Bos. 'Tis so; and this restraint,
Like English mastiffs that grow fierce with tying,
Makes her too passionately apprehend
Those pleasures she's kept from.
Ferd. Curse upon her!
I will no longer study in the book
Of another's heart. Inform her what I told you. [*Exit.*

Enter Duchess *and* Attendants

Bos. All comfort to your grace.
Duch. I will have none.
Pray thee, why dost thou wrap thy poisoned pills
In gold and sugar?
Bos. Your elder brother, the lord Ferdinand,

Is come to visit you, and sends you word,
'Cause once he rashly made a solemn vow
Never to see you more, he comes i' th' night;
And prays you gently neither torch nor taper
Shine in your chamber: he will kiss your hand,
And reconcile himself; but, for his vow,
He dares not see you.
Duch. At his pleasure.
Take hence the lights; he's come.
[*Exeunt* Attendants *with lights.*

Enter FERDINAND

Ferd. Where are you?
Duch. Here, sir.
Ferd. This darkness suits you well.
Duch. I would ask your pardon.
Ferd. You have it;
For I account it the honorabl'st revenge,
Where I may kill, to pardon. Where are your cubs?
Duch. Whom?
Ferd. Call them your children,
For though our national law distinguish bastards
From true legitimate issue, compassionate nature
Makes them all equal.
Duch. Do you visit me for this?
You violate a sacrament o' th' church
Shall make you howl in hell for't.
Ferd. It had been well,
Could you have lived thus always; for indeed,
You were too much i' th' light — but no more;
I come to seal my peace with you. Here's a hand,
[*Gives her a dead man's hand.*
To which you have vowed much love; the ring upon't
You gave.
Duch. I affectionately kiss it.
Ferd. Pray do, and bury the print of it in your heart.

I will leave this ring with you, for a love-token;
And the hand, as sure as the ring; and do not doubt
But you shall have the heart too: when you need a friend,
Send it to him that owed it; you shall see
Whether he can aid you.
Duch. You are very cold:
I fear you are not well after your travel.
Ha! lights! O, horrible!
Ferd. Let her have lights enough. [*Exit.*
Duch. What witchcraft doth he practise, that he hath left
A dead man's hand here?
[*Here is discovered, behind a traverse, the artificial figures of* ANTONIO *and his children, appearing as if they were dead.*
Bos. Look you, here's the piece, from which 'twas ta'en.
He doth present you this sad spectacle,
That, now you know directly they are dead,
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve
For that which cannot be recovered.
Duch. There is not between heaven and earth one wish
I stay for after this: it wastes me more
Than were't my picture, fashioned out of wax,
Stuck with a magical needle, and then buried
In some foul dunghill;[n] and yond's an excellent property
For a tyrant, which I would account mercy.
Bos. What's that?
Duch. If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk,
And let me freeze to death.
Bos. Come, you must live.
Duch. That's the greatest torture souls feel in hell,
In hell that they must live, and cannot die.
Portia,[n] I'll new kindle thy coals again,
And revive the rare and almost dead example
Of a loving wife.
Bos. O fie! despair? remember

You are a Christian.
Duch. The church enjoins fasting:
I'll starve myself to death.
Bos. Leave this vain sorrow.
Things being at the worst, begin to mend:
The bee when he hath shot his sting into your hand,
May then play with your eyelid.
Duch. Good comfortable fellow!
Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel
To have all his bones new set; entreat him live
To be executed again. Who must dispatch me? 80
I account this world a tedious theatre,
For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will.
Bos. Come, be of comfort; I will save your life.
Duch. Indeed I have not leisure to tend so small a business.
Bos. Now, by my life, I pity you.
Duch. Thou art a fool then,
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretched
As cannot pity itself. I am full of daggers.
Puff, let me blow these vipers from me.

Enter Servant

What are you?
Serv. One that wishes you long life.
Duch. I would thou wert hanged for the horrible curse 90
Thou hast given me. I shall shortly grow one
[*Exit* Servant.
Of the miracles of pity. I'll go pray; no,
I'll go curse.
Bos. O, fie!
Duch. I could curse the stars.
Bos. O, fearful!
Duch. And those three smiling seasons of the year
Into a Russian winter: nay, the world

To its first chaos.

Bos. Look you, the stars shine still.

Duch. O, but you must remember, my curse hath a great way to go: —

Plagues, that make lanes through largest families,
Consume them!

Bos. Fie, lady!

Duch. Let them like tyrants
Never be remembered, but for the ill they have done;
Let all the zealous prayers of mortified
Churchmen forget them!

Bos. O, uncharitable!

Duch. Let Heaven, a little while, cease crowning martyrs,
To punish them!
Go, howl them this, and say, I long to bleed:
It is some mercy when men kill with speed. [*Exit.*

Enter FERDINAND

Ferd. Excellent, as I would wish; she's plagued in art:
These presentations are but framed in wax,
By the curious master in that quality,
Vincentio Lauriola, and she takes them
For true substantial bodies.

Bos. Why do you do this?

Ferd. To bring her to despair.

Bos. 'Faith, end here,
And go no farther in your cruelty;
Send her a penitential garment to put on
Next to her delicate skin, and furnish her
With beads, and prayer-books.

Ferd. Damn her! that body of hers,
While that my blood ran pure in't, was more worth
Than that which thou wouldst comfort, called a soul.
I will send her masks of common courtesans,
Have her *meat* served up by bawds and ruffians,

And, 'cause she'll needs be mad, I am resolved
To remove forth the common hospital
All the mad-folk, and place them near her lodging;
There let them practise together, sing and dance,
And act their gambols to the full o' th' moon:
If she can sleep the better for it, let her.
Your work is almost ended.
Bos. Must I see her again?
Ferd. Yes.
Bos. Never.
Ferd. You must.
Bos. Never in mine own shape;
That's forfeited by my intelligence,[n]
And this last cruel lie: when you send me next,
The business shall be comfort.
Ferd. Very likely;
Thy pity is nothing of kin to thee. Antonio
Lurks about Milan: thou shalt shortly thither,
To feed a fire as great as my revenge;
Which never will slack till it have spent his fuel:
Intemperate agues make physicians cruel. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter Duchess *and* CARIOLA

Duch. What hideous noise was that?
Cari. 'Tis the wild consort
Of madmen, lady, which your tyrant brother
Hath placed about your lodging: this tyranny,
I think, was never practised till this hour.
Duch. Indeed, I thank him: nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits; whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad. Sit down;
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy.

Cari. O, 'twill increase your melancholy.
Duch. Thou art deceived:
To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.
This is a prison.
Cari. Yes, but you shall live
To shake this durance off.
Duch. Thou art a fool:
The robin redbreast and the nightingale
Never live long in cages.
Cari. Pray, dry your eyes:
What think you of, madam?
Duch. Of nothing;
When I muse thus, I sleep.
Cari. Like a madman, with your eyes open?
Duch. Dost thou think we shall know one another
In th' other world?
Cari. Yes, out of question.
Duch. O, that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the dead!
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure,
I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle;
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow:[n]
Th' Heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur, yet I am not mad.
I am acquainted with sad misery,
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar;
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now?
Cari. Like to your picture in the gallery,
A deal of life in show, but none in practice;
Or rather like some reverend monument
Whose ruins are even pitied.
Duch. Very proper;
And fortune seems only to have her eyesight,
To behold my tragedy. How now!
What noise is that?

Enter Servant

Serv. I am come to tell you,
Your brother hath intended you some sport.
A great physician, when the Pope was sick
Of a deep melancholy, presented him
With several sorts of madmen, which wild object
Being full of change and sport, forced him to laugh,
And so th' impostume broke: the selfsame cure
The duke intends on you.
Duch. Let them come in.

Enter Madmen

Serv. There's a mad lawyer; and a secular priest;
A doctor, that hath forfeited his wits
By jealousy; an astrologian,
That in his works said, such a day o' th' month
Should be the day of doom, and failing of't,
Ran mad; an English tailor, crazed i' th' brain
With the study of new fashions; a gentleman usher,
Quite beside himself with care to keep in mind
The number of his lady's salutations,
Or "how do you," she employed him in each morning;
A farmer too, an excellent knave in grain,[n]
Mad 'cause he was hindered transportation;[n]
And let one broker that's mad loose to these,
You'd think the devil were among them.
Duch. Sit, Cariola. Let them loose when you please,
For I am chained to endure all your tyranny.

Here by a madman this Song is sung, to a dismal kind of music

O, let us howl some heavy note,
Some deadly dogged howl,
Sounding, as from the threatening throat
Of beasts and fatal fowl!

As ravens, screech-owls, bulls, and bears,
We'll bell, and bawl our parts,
Till irksome noise have cloyed your ears,
And corrasived your hearts.
At last, whenas our quire wants breath,
Our bodies being blest,
We'll sing, like swans, to welcome death,
And die in love and rest.

First Madman. Doomsday not come yet! I'll draw it nearer by a perspective, or make a glass that shall set all the world on fire upon an instant. I cannot sleep; my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines.

Second Madman. Hell is a mere glass-house, where the devils are continually blowing up women's souls on hollow irons, and the fire never goes out.

Third Madman. I will lie with every woman in my parish the tenth night; I will tithe them over like haycocks.

Fourth Madman. Shall my 'pothecary outgo me, because I am a cuckold? I have found out his roguery; he makes alum of his wife's urine, and sells it to Puritans that have sore throats with overstraining.[n]

First Madman. I have skill in heraldry.

Second Madman. Hast?

First Madman. You do give for your crest a woodcock's head, with the brains picked out on't; you are a very ancient gentleman.[n]

Third Madman. Greek is turned Turk: we are only to be saved by the Helvetian translation.[n]

First Madman. Come on, sir, I will lay the law to you.

Second Madman. O, rather lay a corrasive; the law will eat to the bone.

Third Madman. He that drinks but to satisfy nature, is damned.

Fourth Madman. If I had my glass here, I would show a sight should make all the women here call me mad doctor.

First Madman. What's he, a rope-maker?

Second Madman. No, no, no, a snuffling knave, that while he shows the tombs, will have his hand in a wench's placket.

Third Madman. Woe to the caroche, that brought home my wife from the mask at three o'clock in the morning! it had a large featherbed in it.

Fourth Madman. I have pared the devil's nails forty times, roasted them in raven's eggs, and cured agues with them.

Third Madman. Get me three hundred milch bats, to make possets to procure sleep.

Fourth Madman. All the college may throw their caps at me; I have made a soapboiler costive: it was my masterpiece.

[*Here the dance, consisting of eight madmen, with music answerable thereunto; after which,* BOSOLA, *like an old man, enters.*

Duch. Is he mad too?

Serv. Pray question him. I'll leave you.

[*Exeunt all but the* Duchess *and* BOSOLA.

Bos. I am come to make thy tomb.

Duch. Ha! my tomb!
Thou speak'st as if I lay upon my death-bed,
Gasping for breath: dost thou perceive me sick?

Bos. Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness is insensible.

Duch. Thou art not mad, sure: dost know me?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Who am I?

Bos. Thou art a box of worm-seed, at best but a salvatory of green mummy. What's this flesh? a little crudded milk fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in; more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earthworms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in *the body: this* world is like her little turf of grass, and

the Heaven o'er our heads, like her looking-glass, only gives us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our prison.

Duch. Am not I thy duchess?

Bos. Thou art some great woman, sure, for riot begins to sit on thy forehead (clad in grey hairs) twenty years sooner than on a merry milkmaid's. Thou sleepest worse than if a mouse should be forced to take up her lodging in a cat's ear: a little infant that breeds its teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if thou wert the more unquiet bedfellow.

Duch. I am Duchess of Malfi still.

Bos. That makes thy sleep so broken:
Glories, like glowworms, afar off shine bright,
But looked to near, have neither heat nor light.

Duch. Thou art very plain.

Bos. My trade is to flatter the dead, not the living; I am a tomb-maker.

Duch. And thou com'st to make my tomb?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Let me be a little merry:
Of what stuff wilt thou make it?

Bos. Nay, resolve me first, of what fashion?

Duch. Why, do we grow fantastical in our death-bed? Do we affect fashion in the grave?

Bos. Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs
Do not lie, as they were wont, seeming to pray
Up to Heaven; but with their hands under their cheeks,
As if they died of the toothache: they are not carved
With their eyes fixed upon the stars; but as
Their minds were wholly bent upon the world,
The selfsame way they seem to turn their faces.

Duch. Let me know fully, therefore, the effect
Of this thy dismal preparation,
This talk, fit for a charnel.

Bos. Now I shall:

Enter Executioners *with a coffin, cords, and bell.*

Here is a present from your princely brothers,
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings
Last benefit, last sorrow.
Duch. Let me see it:
I have so much obedience in my blood,
I wish it in their veins to do them good.
Bos. This is your last presence-chamber.
Cari. O my sweet lady!
Duch. Peace; it affrights not me.
Bos. I am the common bellman,
That usually is sent to condemned persons
The night before they suffer.
Duch. Even now
Thou said'st thou wast a tomb-maker.
Bos. 'Twas to bring you
By degrees to mortification. Listen: [*Dirge.*

Hark, now everything is still,
The screech-owl, and the whistler shrill,
Call upon our dame aloud,
And bid her quickly don her shroud!
Much you had of land and rent;
Your length in clay's now competent:
A long war disturbed your mind;
Here your perfect peace is signed.
Of what is't fools make such vain keeping?
Sin their conception, their birth, weeping;
Their life, a general mist of error,
Their death, a hideous storm of terror.
Strew your hair with powders sweet,
Don clean linen, bathe your feet,
And (the foul fiend more to check)
A crucifix let bless your neck:
'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;
End your groan, and come away.

Cari. Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! alas!
What will you do with my lady? — Call for help.
Duch. To whom, to our next neighbours? they are mad-folks.
Bos. Remove that noise.
Duch. Farewell, Cariola.
In my last will, I have not much to give:
A many hungry guests have fed upon me;
Thine will be a poor reversion.
Cari. I will die with her.
Duch. I pray thee, look thou giv'st my little boy
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep. — Now what you please:
[CARIOLA *is forced out.*
What death?
Bos. Strangling; here are your executioners.
Duch. I forgive them:
The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o' th' lungs,
Would do as much as they do.
Bos. Doth not death fright you?
Duch. Who would be afraid on't,
Knowing to meet such excellent company
In th' other world?
Bos. Yet, methinks,
The manner of your death should much afflict you;
This cord should terrify you.
Duch. Not a whit:
What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds? or to be smothered
With cassia? or to be shot to death with pearls?
I know death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits; and 'tis found
They go on such strange geometrical hinges,[n]
You may open them both ways: any way, for Heaven sake,
So I were out of your whispering. Tell my brothers,
That I *perceive* death, now I am well awake,

Best gift is they can give, or I can take.
I would fain put off my last woman's fault,
I'd not be tedious to you.
Execut. We are ready.
Duch. Dispose my breath how please you, but my body
Bestow upon my women, will you?
Execut. Yes.
Duch. Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength,
Must pull down Heaven upon me:
Yet stay, heaven-gates are not so highly arched
As princes' palaces; they that enter there
Must go upon their knees. Come, violent death,
Serve for mandragora, to make me sleep!
Go, tell my brothers, when I am laid out,
They then may feed in quiet. [*They strangle her.*
Bos. Where's the waiting-woman?
Fetch her: some other strangle the children.

Enter CARIOLA

Look you, there sleeps your mistress.
Cari. O, you are damned
Perpetually for this! My turn is next;
Is't not so ordered?
Bos. Yes, and I am glad
You are so well prepared for't.
Cari. You are deceived, sir,
I am not prepared for't; I will not die:
I will first come to my answer, and know
How I have offended.
Bos. Come, dispatch her.
You kept her counsel, now you shall keep ours.
Cari. I will not die, I must not; I am contracted
To a young gentleman.
Execut. Here's your wedding-ring.
Cari. Let me but speak with the duke; I'll discover

Treason to his person.
Bos. Delays: — throttle her.
Execut. She bites and scratches.
Cari. If you kill me now,
I am damned; I have not been at confession
This two years.
Bos. When?
Cari. I am quick with child.
Bos. Why then,
Your credit's saved. — Bear her into the next room;
Let this lie still.[n] [*They strangle* CARIOLA.

Enter FERDINAND

Ferd. Is she dead?
Bos. She is what
You'd have her. But here begin your pity:
[*Shows the children*[n] *strangled.*
Alas! how have these offended?
Ferd. The death
Of young wolves is never to be pitied.
Bos. Fix your eye here.
Ferd. Constantly.
Bos. Do you not weep?
Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out:
The element of water moistens the earth,
But blood flies upwards and bedews the Heavens.
Ferd. Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young.
Bos. I think not so; her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.
Ferd. She and I were twins;
And should I die this instant, I had lived
Her time to a minute.
Bos. It seems she was born first:
You have bloodily approved the ancient truth,
That kindred commonly do worse agree

Than remote strangers.
Ferd. Let me see her face again.
Why didst not thou pity her? what an excellent
Honest man might'st thou have been
If thou hadst borne her to some sanctuary;
Or, bold in a good cause, opposed thyself,
With thy advancèd sword above thy head,
Between her innocence and my revenge!
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,
Go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done't.
For let me but examine well the cause:
What was the meanness of her match to me?
Only I must confess I had a hope,
Had she continued widow, to have gained
An infinite mass of treasure by her death;
And that was the main cause, her marriage,
That drew a stream of gall quite through my heart.
For thee, as we observe in tragedies
That a good actor many times is cursed
For playing a villain's part, I hate thee for't,
And for my sake say thou hast done much ill, well.
Bos. Let me quicken your memory, for I perceive
You are falling into ingratitude; I challenge
The reward due to my service.
Ferd. I'll tell thee
What I'll give thee.
Bos. Do.
Ferd. I'll give thee a pardon
For this murder.
Bos. Ha!
Ferd. Yes, and 'tis
The largest bounty I can study to do thee.
By what authority didst thou execute
This bloody sentence?
Bos. By yours.
Ferd. Mine! was I her judge?
Did any ceremonial form of law,

Doom her to not being? did a complete jury
Deliver her conviction up i'th' court?
Where shalt thou find this judgement registered,
Unless in hell? See, like a bloody fool,
Th' hast forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for't.
Bos. The office of justice is perverted quite,
When one thief hangs another. Who shall dare
To reveal this?
Ferd. O, I'll tell thee;
The wolf shall find her grave, and scrape it up,
Not to devour the corpse, but to discover
The horrid murder.
Bos. You, not I, shall quake for't.
Ferd. Leave me.
Bos. I will first receive my pension.
Ferd. You are a villain.
Bos. When your ingratitude
Is judge, I am so.
Ferd. O horror,
That not the fear of him, which binds the devils,
Can prescribe man obedience!
Never look upon me more.
Bos. Why, fare thee well:
Your brother and yourself are worthy men:
You have a pair of hearts are hollow graves,
Rotten, and rotting others; and your vengeance,
Like two chained bullets, still goes arm in arm.
You may be brothers; for treason, like the plague,
Doth take much in a blood.[n] I stand like one
That long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream:
I am angry with myself, now that I wake.
Ferd. Get thee into some unknown part o'th' world,
That I may never see thee.
Bos. Let me know
Wherefore I should be thus neglected. Sir,
I served your tyranny, and rather strove,
To *satisfy yourself,* than all the world:

And though I loathed the evil, yet I loved
You that did counsel it; and rather sought
To appear a true servant, than an honest man.
Ferd. I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light:
'Tis a deed of darkness. [*Exit.*
Bos. He's much distracted. Off, my painted honour!
While with vain hopes our faculties we tire,
We seem to sweat in ice and freeze in fire.
What would I do, were this to do again?
I would not change my peace of conscience
For all the wealth of Europe. She stirs; here's life:—
Return, fair soul, from darkness, and lead mine
Out of this sensible hell:—she's warm, she breathes:—
Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart,
To store them with fresh colour.—Who's there!
Some cordial drink! Alas! I dare not call:
So pity would destroy pity. Her eye opes,[n]
And Heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut,
To take me up to mercy.
Duch. Antonio!
Bos. Yes, madam, he is living;
The dead bodies you saw, were but feigned statues;
He's reconciled to your brothers; the Pope hath wrought
The atonement.
Duch. Mercy! [*She dies.*
Bos. O, she's gone again! there the cords of life broke.
O sacred innocence, that sweetly sleeps
On turtles' feathers, whilst a guilty conscience
Is a black register, wherein is writ
All our good deeds and bad, a perspective
That shows us hell! That we cannot be suffered
To do good when we have a mind to it!
This is manly sorrow;
These tears, I am very certain, never grew
In my mother's milk: my estate is sunk
Below the degree of fear: where were
These penitent fountains, while she was living?

O, they were frozen up! Here is a sight
As direful to my soul, as is the sword
Unto a wretch hath slain his father.
Come, I'll bear thee hence,
And execute thy last will; that's deliver
Thy body to the reverend dispose
Of some good women: that, the cruel tyrant
Shall not deny me. Then I'll post to Milan,
Where somewhat I will speedily enact
Worth my dejection. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FIFTH

SCENE I[n]

Enter ANTONIO *and* DELIO

Ant. What think you of my hope of reconcilement
To the Arragonian brethren?
Delio. I misdoubt it;
For though they have sent their letters of safe conduct
For your repair to Milan, they appear
But nets to entrap you. The Marquis of Pescara,
Under whom you hold certain land in cheat,[n]
Much 'gainst his noble nature hath been moved
To seize those lands, and some of his dependents
Are at this instant making it their suit
To be invested in your revenues.[n]
I cannot think they mean well to your life,
That do deprive you of your means of life,
Your living.
Ant. You are still an heretic
To any safety I can shape myself.
Delio. Here comes the marquis: I will make myself
Petitioner for some part of your land,
To know whither it is flying.
Ant. I pray do.

Enter PESCARA

Delio. Sir, I have a suit to you.
Pes. To me?
Delio. An easy one:
There is the citadel of St. Bennet,[n]

With some demesnes, of late in the possession
Of Antonio Bologna, — please you bestow them on me.
Pes. You are my friend; but this is such a suit,
Nor fit for me to give, nor you to take.
Delio. No, sir?
Pes. I will give you ample reason for't,
Soon in private: here's the Cardinal's mistress.

Enter JULIA

Julia. My lord, I am grown your poor petitioner,
And should be an ill beggar, had I not
A great man's letter here, the Cardinal's,
To court you in my favour.
Pes. He entreats for you
The citadel of St. Bennet, that belonged
To the banished Bologna.
Julia. Yes.
Pes. I could not have thought of a friend I could
Rather pleasure with it: 'tis yours.
Julia. Sir, I thank you;
And he shall know how doubly I am engaged
Both in your gift, and speediness of giving,
Which makes your grant the greater. [*Exit.*
Ant. [*Aside.*] How they fortify
Themselves with my ruin!
Delio. Sir, I am
Little bound to you.
Pes. Why?
Delio. Because you denied this suit to me, and gave't
To such a creature.
Pes. Do you know what it was?
It was Antonio's land; not forfeited
By course of law, but ravished from his throat
By the Cardinal's entreaty: it were not fit
I should bestow so main a piece of wrong
Upon *my friend*; 'tis a gratification

Only due to a strumpet, for it is injustice.
Shall I sprinkle the pure blood of innocents
To make those followers I call my friends
Look ruddier upon me? I am glad
This land, ta'en from the owner by such wrong,
Returns again unto so foul an use,
As salary for his lust. Learn, good Delio,
To ask noble things of me, and you shall find
I'll be a noble giver.
Delio. You instruct me well.
Ant. [*Aside.*] Why, here's a man now, would fright impudence
From sauciest beggars.
Pes. Prince Ferdinand's come to Milan,
Sick, as they give out, of an apoplexy;
But some say, 'tis a frenzy: I am going
To visit him. [*Exit.*
Ant. 'Tis a noble old fellow.
Delio. What course do you mean to take, Antonio?
Ant. This night I mean to venture all my fortune,
Which is no more than a poor lingering life,
To the Cardinal's worst of malice: I have got
Private access to his chamber; and intend
To visit him about the mid of night,
As once his brother did our noble duchess.
It may be that the sudden apprehension
Of danger, for I'll go in mine own shape,
When he shall see it fraught with love and duty,
May draw the poison out of him, and work
A friendly reconcilement: if it fail,
Yet it shall rid me of this infamous calling;
For better fall once, than be ever falling.
Delio. I'll second you in all danger, and, howe'er;
My life keeps rank with yours.
Ant. You are still my loved and best friend.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter PESCARA *and* Doctor

Pes. Now, doctor, may I visit your patient?
Doc. If't please your lordship: but he's instantly
To take the air here in the gallery
By my direction.
Pes. Pray thee, what's his disease?
Doc. A very pestilent disease, my lord,
They call lycanthropia.[n]
Pes. What's that?
I need a dictionary to't?
Doc. I'll tell you.
In those that are possessed with't there o'erflows
Such melancholy humour, they imagine
Themselves to be transformed into wolves;
Steal forth to churchyards in the dead of night,
And dig dead bodies up: as two nights since
One met the duke 'bout midnight in a lane
Behind St. Mark's Church, with the leg of a man
Upon his shoulder, and he howled fearfully;
Said he was a wolf, only the difference
Was, a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,
His on the inside; bade them take their swords,
Rip up his flesh, and try: straight I was sent for,
And having ministered unto him, found his grace
Very well recovered.
Pes. I am glad on't.
Doc. Yet not without some fear
Of a relapse. If he grow to his fit again,
I'll go a nearer way to work with him
Than ever Paracelsus dreamed of; if
They'll give me leave, I'll buffet his madness out of him.
Stand *aside; he comes.*

Enter FERDINAND, MALATESTE, Cardinal, *and* BOSOLA

Ferd. Leave me.

Mal. Why doth your lordship love this solitariness?

Ferd. Eagles commonly fly alone: they are crows, daws, and starlings that flock together. Look, what's that follows me?

Mal. Nothing, my lord.

Ferd. Yes.

Mal. 'Tis your shadow.

Ferd. Stay it; let it not haunt me.

Mal. Impossible, if you move, and the sun shine.

Ferd. I will throttle it.

[*Throws himself on the ground.*

Mal. O my lord, you are angry with nothing.

Ferd. You are a fool: how is't possible I should catch my shadow, unless I fall upon't? When I go to hell, I mean to carry a bribe; for, look you, good gifts evermore make way for the worst persons.

Pes. Rise, good my lord.

Ferd. I am studying the art of patience.

Pes. 'Tis a noble virtue.

Ferd. To drive six snails before me from this town to Moscow;[n] neither use goad nor whip to them, but let them take their own time; — (the patient'st man i'th' world match me for an experiment) — and I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.

Card. Force him up.

Ferd. Use me well, you were best.

What I have done, I have done: I'll confess nothing.

Doc. Now let me come to him. — Are you mad, my lord?

Are you out of your princely wits?

Ferd. What's he?

Pes. Your doctor.

Ferd. Let me have his beard sawed off, and his eyebrows
Filed more civil.

Doc. I must do mad tricks with him,
For that's the only way on't. — I have brought
Your grace a salamander's skin, to keep you
From sun-burning.

Ferd. I have cruel sore eyes.

Doc. The white of a cockatrix's egg[n] is present remedy.

Ferd. Let it be a new-laid one, you were best.
Hide me from him: physicians are like kings,
They brook no contradiction.

Doc. Now he begins
To fear me, now let me alone with him.

Card. How now? put off your gown!

Doc. Let me have some forty urinals filled with rosewater: he and I'll go pelt one another with them. — Now he begins to fear me. — Can you fetch a frisk,[n] sir? Let him go, let him go upon my peril: I find by his eye he stands in awe of me; I'll make him as tame as a dormouse.

Ferd. Can you fetch your frisks, sir! I will stamp him into a cullis, flay off his skin, to cover one of the anatomies this rogue hath set i'th' cold yonder in Barber-Chirurgeon's hall.[n] Hence, hence! you are all of you like beasts for sacrifice: here's nothing left of you, but tongue and belly, flattery and lechery. [*Exit.*

Pes. Doctor, he did not fear you throughly.

Doc. True; I was somewhat too forward.

Bos. Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgement
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!

Pes. Knows your grace
What accident hath brought unto the prince
This strange distraction?

Card. [*Aside.*] I must feign somewhat: — Thus they say it *grew.*

You have heard it rumoured for these many years,
None of our family dies but there is seen
The shape of an old woman, which is given
By tradition to us to have been murdered
By her nephews, for her riches. Such a figure
One night, as the prince sat up late at's book,
Appeared to him: when, crying out for help,
The gentleman of's chamber, found his grace
All on a cold sweat, altered much in face
And language: since which apparition,
He hath grown worse and worse, and I much fear
He cannot live.
Bos. Sir, I would speak with you.
Pes. We'll leave your grace,
Wishing to the sick prince, our noble lord,
All health of mind and body.
Card. You are most welcome.
[*Exeunt all but* Cardinal *and* BOSOLA.
Are you come? so — [*Aside.*] This fellow must not know
By any means I had intelligence
In our duchess' death; for though I counselled it,
The full of all th' engagement seemed to grow
From Ferdinand. — Now, sir, how fares our sister?
I do not think but sorrow makes her look
Like to an oft-dyed garment: she shall now
Taste comfort from me. Why do you look so wildly?
O, the fortune of your master here, the prince,
Dejects you; but be you of happy comfort:
If you'll do one thing for me, I'll entreat,
Though he had a cold tombstone o'er his bones,
I'd make you what you would be.
Bos. Anything,
Give it me in a breath, and let me fly to't:
They that think long, small expedition win,
For musing much o'th' end, cannot begin.

Enter JULIA

Julia. Sir, will you come in to supper?
Card. I am busy; leave me.
Julia. [*Aside.*] What an excellent shape hath that fellow! [*Exit.*
Card. 'Tis thus. Antonio lurks here in Milan:
Inquire him out, and kill him. While he lives,
Our sister cannot marry, and I have thought
Of an excellent match for her. Do this, and style me
Thy advancement.[n]
Bos. But by what means shall I find him out?
Card. There is a gentleman called Delio,
Here in the camp, that hath been long approved
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow;
Follow him to mass: maybe Antonio,
Although he do account religion
But a school-name, for fashion of the world
May accompany him; or else go inquire out
Delio's confessor, and see if you can bribe
Him to reveal it. There are a thousand ways
A man might find to trace him; as to know
What fellows haunt the Jews, for taking up
Great sums of money, for sure he's in want;
Or else to go to th' picture-makers, and learn
Who bought her picture lately:[n] some of these
Happily may take.
Bos. Well, I'll not freeze i'th' business:
I would see that wretched thing, Antonio,
Above all sights i'th' world.
Card. Do, and be happy. [*Exit.*
Bos. This fellow doth breed basilisks in's eyes,
He's nothing else but murder; yet he seems
Not to have notice of the duchess' death.
'Tis his cunning: I must follow his example;
There cannot be a surer way to trace
Than that of an old fox.

Enter JULIA

Julia. So, sir, you are well met.
Bos. How now?
Julia. Nay, the doors are fast enough:
Now, sir, I will make you confess your treachery.
Bos. Treachery!
Julia. Yes, confess to me
Which of my women 'twas you hired to put
Love-powder into my drink?
Bos. Love-powder!
Julia. Yes, when I was at Malfi.
Why should I fall in love with such a face else?
I have already suffered for thee so much pain,
The only remedy to do me good,
Is to kill my longing.
Bos. Sure your pistol holds
Nothing but perfumes, or kissing-comfits. Excellent lady!
You have a pretty way on't to discover
Your longing. Come, come, I'll disarm you,
And arm you thus: yet this is wondrous strange.
Julia. Compare thy form and my eyes together,
You'll find my love no such great miracle. Now you'll say
I am wanton: this nice modesty in ladies
Is but a troublesome familiar
That haunts them.
Bos. Know you me, I am a blunt soldier.
Julia. The better;
Sure, there wants fire, where there are no lively sparks
Of roughness.
Bos. And I want compliment.
Julia. Why, ignorance
In courtship cannot make you do amiss,
If you have a heart to do well.
Bos. You are very fair.

Julia. Nay, if you lay beauty to my charge,
I must plead unguilty.
Bos. Your bright eyes
Carry a quiver of darts in them, sharper
Than sunbeams.
Julia. You will mar me with commendation,
Put yourself to the charge of courting me,
Whereas now I woo you.
Bos. [*Aside.*] I have it; I will work upon this creature. —
Let us grow most amorously familiar:
If the great Cardinal should see me thus,
Would he not count me a villain?
Julia. No, he might count me a wanton,
Not lay a scruple of offence on you;
For if I see and steal a diamond,
The fault is not i'th' stone, but in me the thief
That purloins it. I am sudden with you:
We that are great women of pleasure, use to cut off
These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings,
And in an instant join the sweet delight
And the pretty excuse together. Had you been i'th' street,
Under my chamber window, even there
I should have courted you.
Bos. O, you are an excellent lady!
Julia. Bid me do somewhat for you presently,
To express I love you.
Bos. I will, and if you love me,
Fail not to effect it.
The Cardinal is grown wondrous melancholy:
Demand the cause, let him not put you off
With feigned excuse; discover the main ground on't.
Julia. Why would you know this?
Bos. I have depended on him,
And I hear that he is fall'n in some disgrace
With the *emperor; if* he be, like the mice

That forsake falling houses, I would shift
To other dependence.
Julia. You shall not need follow the wars:
I'll be your maintenance.
Bos. And I your loyal servant;
But I cannot leave my calling.
Julia. Not leave an
Ungrateful general, for the love of a sweet lady!
You are like some cannot sleep in feather beds,
But must have blocks for their pillows.
Bos. Will you do this?
Julia. Cunningly.
Bos. To-morrow, I'll expect th' intelligence.
Julia. To-morrow! get you into my cabinet;
You shall have it with you. Do not delay me,
No more than I do you: I am like one
That is condemned; I have my pardon promised,
But I would see it sealed. Go, get you in:
You shall see me wind my tongue about his heart,
Like a skein of silk. [*Exit* BOSOLA.

Enter Cardinal *and* Servants

Card. Where are you?
Serv. Here.
Card. Let none upon your lives
Have conference with the prince Ferdinand,
Unless I know it. [*Aside.*] In this distraction,
[*Exeunt* Servants.
He may reveal the murder.—
Yond's my lingering consumption:
I am weary of her, and by any means
Would be quit of.
Julia. How now, my lord, what ails you?
Card. Nothing.
Julia. O, you are much altered!
Come, I must be your secretary,[n] and remove

This lead from off your bosom: what's the matter?
Card. I may not tell you.
Julia. Are you so far in love with sorrow,
You cannot part with part of it? or think you
I cannot love your grace when you are sad
As well as merry? or do you suspect
I, that have been a secret to your heart
These many winters, cannot be the same
Unto your tongue?
Card. Satisfy thy longing;
The only way to make thee keep my counsel
Is, not to tell thee.
Julia. Tell your echo this,
Or flatterers, that like echoes still report
What they hear though most imperfect, and not me;
For, if that you be true unto yourself,
I'll know.
Card. Will you rack me?[n]
Julia. No, judgement shall
Draw it from you: it is an equal fault,
To tell one's secrets unto all or none.
Card. The first argues folly.
Julia. But the last tyranny.
Card. Very well; why, imagine I have committed
Some secret deed, which I desire the world
May never hear of.
Julia. Therefore may not I know it?
You have concealed for me as great a sin
As adultery. Sir, never was occasion
For perfect trial of my constancy
Till now: sir, I beseech you —
Card. You'll repent it.
Julia. Never.
Card. It hurries thee to ruin: I'll not tell thee.
Be well advised, and think what danger 'tis
To receive a prince's secrets: they that do,
Had need *have their* breasts hooped with adamant

To contain them. I pray thee yet be satisfied;
Examine thine own frailty; 'tis more easy
To tie knots, than unloose them: 'tis a secret
That, like a lingering poison, may chance lie
Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.
Julia. Now you dally with me.
Card. No more, thou shalt know it.
By my appointment, the great Duchess of Malfi
And two of her young children, four nights since,
Were strangled.
Julia. O Heaven! sir, what have you done?
Card. How now! how settles this? think you your bosom
Will be a grave dark and obscure enough
For such a secret?
Julia. You have undone yourself, sir.
Card. Why?
Julia. It lies not in me to conceal it.
Card. No!
Come, I will swear you to't upon this book.
Julia. Most religiously.
Card. Kiss it.
Now you shall never utter it; thy curiosity
Hath undone thee: thou'rt poisoned with that book;
Because I knew thou couldst not keep my counsel,
I have bound thee to't by death.

Enter BOSOLA

Bos. For pity sake, hold!
Card. Ha, Bosola!
Julia. I forgive you
This equal piece of justice you have done;
For I betrayed your counsel to that fellow:
He overheard it; that was the cause I said
It lay not in me to conceal it.
Bos. O foolish woman,

Couldst not thou have poisoned him?
Julia. 'Tis weakness,
Too much to think what should have been done. I go,
I know not whither. [*Dies.*
Card. Wherefore com'st thou hither?
Bos. That I might find a great man, like yourself,
Not out of his wits, as the lord Ferdinand,
To remember my service.
Card. I'll have thee hewed in pieces.
Bos. Make not yourself such a promise of that life,
Which is not yours to dispose of.
Card. Who placed thee here?
Bos. Her lust, as she intended.
Card. Very well:
Now you know me for your fellow-murderer.
Bos. And wherefore should you lay fair marble colours
Upon your rotten purposes to me? [n]
Unless you imitate some that do plot great treasons,
And when they have done, go hide themselves i'th' graves
Of those were actors in't?
Card. No more;
There is a fortune attends thee.
Bos. Shall I go sue to fortune any longer?
'Tis the fool's pilgrimage.
Card. I have honours in store for thee.
Bos. There are a many ways that conduct to seeming
Honour, and some of them very dirty ones.
Card. Throw to the devil
Thy melancholy. The fire burns well;
What need we keep a stirring of't, and make
A greater smother? thou wilt kill Antonio?
Bos. Yes.
Card. Take up that body.
Bos. I think I shall

Shortly grow the common bier for churchyards.

Card. I will allow thee some dozen of attendants,
To aid thee in the murder.

Bos. O, by no means. Physicians that apply horse-leeches to any rank swelling, use to cut off their tails, that the blood may run through them the faster. Let me have no train when I go to shed blood, lest it make me have a greater when I ride to the gallows.

Card. Come to me after midnight, to help to remove that body
To her own lodging: I'll give out she died o'th' plague;
'Twill breed the less inquiry after her death.

Bos. Where's Castruccio, her husband?

Card. He's rode to Naples, to take possession
Of Antonio's citadel.

Bos. Believe me, you have done a very happy turn.

Card. Fail not to come: there is the master-key
Of our lodgings; and by that you may conceive
What trust I plant in you.

Bos. You shall find me ready. [*Exit* Cardinal.
O poor Antonio, though nothing be so needful
To thy estate, as pity, yet I find
Nothing so dangerous! I must look to my footing:
In such slippery ice-pavements, men had need
To be frost-nailed well, they may break their necks else;
The precedent's here afore me. How this man
Bears up in blood! seems fearless! why, 'tis well:
Security some men call the suburbs of hell,
Only a dead wall between. Well, good Antonio,
I'll seek thee out; and all my care shall be
To put thee into safety from the reach
Of these most cruel biters, that have got
Some of thy blood already. It may be,
I'll join with thee, in a most just revenge:
The weakest arm is strong enough, that strikes
With the sword of justice. Still methinks the duchess

Haunts me: there, there! — 'tis nothing but my melancholy.
O Penitence, let me truly taste thy cup,
That throws men down, only to raise them up! [*Exit.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter ANTONIO *and* DELIO

Delio. Yond's the Cardinal's window. This fortification
Grew from the ruins of an ancient abbey;
And to yond' side o'th' river lies a wall,
Piece of a cloister, which in my opinion
Gives the best echo that you ever heard,
So hollow and so dismal, and withal
So plain in the distinction of our words,
That many have supposed it is a spirit
That answers.
Ant. I do love these ancient ruins.
We never tread upon them, but we set
Our foot upon some reverend history:
And, questionless, here in this open court,
Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of stormy weather, some men lie interred
Loved the church so well, and gave so largely to't,
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday; but all things have their end:
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death that we have.
Echo (*from the* Duchess' *grave*). *Like death that we have.*
Delio. Now the echo hath caught you.
Ant. It groaned, methought, and gave
A very deadly accent.
Echo. *Deadly accent.*
Delio. I told you 'twas a pretty one: you may make *it*

A huntsman, or a falconer, a musician,
Or a thing of sorrow.
Echo. *A thing of sorrow.*
Ant. Aye, sure, that suits it best.
Echo. *That suits it best.*
Ant. 'Tis very like my wife's voice.
Echo. *Aye, wife's voice.*
Delio. Come, let us walk farther from't.
I would not have you go to th' Cardinal's to-night:
Do not.
Echo. *Do not.*
Delio. Wisdom doth not more moderate wasting sorrow,
Than time: take time for't; be mindful of thy safety.
Echo. *Be mindful of thy safety.*
Ant. Necessity compels me:
Make scrutiny throughout the passes
Of your own life, you'll find it impossible
To fly your fate.
Echo. *O fly your fate!*
Delio. Hark! the dead stones seem to have pity on you,
And give you good counsel.
Ant. Echo, I will not talk with thee,
For thou art a dead thing.
Echo. *Thou art a dead thing.*
Ant. My duchess is asleep now,
And her little ones, I hope sweetly: O Heaven,
Shall I never see her more?
Echo. *Never see her more.*
Ant. I marked not one repetition of the echo
But that; and on the sudden, a clear light
Presented me a face folded in sorrow.
Delio. Your fancy merely.
Ant. Come, I'll be out of this ague,
For to live thus, is not indeed to live;
It is a mockery and abuse of life:
I will not henceforth save myself by halves;
Lose all, or nothing.

Delio. Your own virtue save you!
I'll fetch your eldest son, and second you:
It may be that the sight of his own blood
Spread in so sweet a figure, may beget
The more compassion. However, fare you well.
Though in our miseries fortune have a part,
Yet in our noble sufferings she hath none;
Contempt of pain, that we may call our own.[n] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV[n]

Enter Cardinal, PESCARA, MALATESTE, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN

Card. You shall not watch to-night by the sick prince;
His grace is very well recovered.
Mal. Good my lord, suffer us.
Card. O, by no means:
The noise and change of object in his eye
Doth more distract him: I pray, all to bed;
And though you hear him in his violent fit,
Do not rise, I entreat you.
Pes. So, sir; we shall not.
Card. Nay, I must have you promise
Upon your honours, for I was enjoined to't
By himself; and he seemed to urge it sensibly.
Pes. Let our honours bind this trifle.
Card. Nor any of your followers.
Mal. Neither.
Card. It may be, to make trial of your promise,
When he's asleep, myself will rise and feign
Some of his mad tricks, and cry out for help,
And feign myself in danger.
Mal. If your throat were cutting,
I'd not come at you, now I have protested against it.[n]
Card. Why, I thank you.
Gris. 'Twas a foul storm to-night.

Rod. The lord Ferdinand's chamber shook like an osier.

Mal. 'Twas nothing but pure kindness in the devil,
To rock his own child. [*Exeunt all but the* Cardinal.

Card. The reason why I would not suffer these
About my brother, is, because at midnight
I may with better privacy convey
Julia's body to her own lodging. O my conscience!
I would pray now; but the devil takes away my heart
For having any confidence in prayer.
About this hour I appointed Bosola
To fetch the body: when he hath served my turn,
He dies. [*Exit.*

Enter BOSOLA

Bos. Ha! 'twas the Cardinal's voice; I heard him name
Bosola and my death: listen, I hear one's footing.

Enter FERDINAND

Ferd. Strangling is a very quiet death.

Bos. [*Aside.*] Nay then, I see I must stand upon my guard.

Ferd. What say to that? whisper softly; do you agree to't? So, it must be done i'th' dark; the Cardinal would not for a thousand pounds the doctor should see it. [*Exit.*

Bos. My death is plotted; here's the consequence of murder.
We value not desert nor Christian breath,
When we know black deeds must be cured with death.

Enter Servant *and* ANTONIO

Serv. Here stay, sir, and be confident, I pray:
I'll fetch you a dark lantern. [*Exit.*

Ant. Could I take him at his prayers,
There were hope of pardon.
Bos. Fall right my sword:
I'll not give thee so much leisure as to pray.
[*Stabs* ANTONIO.
Ant. O, I am gone! Thou hast ended a long suit
In a minute.
Bos. What art thou?
Ant. A most wretched thing,
That only have the benefit in death,
To appear myself.

Enter Servant *with a light*

Serv. Where are you, sir?
Ant. Very near my home. — Bosola!
Serv. O misfortune!
Bos. Smother thy pity, thou art dead else. — Antonio!
The man I would have saved 'bove mine own life!
We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded
Which way please them. O good Antonio,
I'll whisper one thing in thy dying ear,
Shall make thy heart break quickly! thy fair duchess
And two sweet children —
Ant. Their very names
Kindle a little life in me.
Bos. Are murdered.
Ant. Some men have wished to die
At the hearing of sad tidings; I am glad
That I shall do't in sadness: [n] I would not now
Wish my wounds balmed nor healed, for I have no use
To put my life to. In all our quest of greatness,
Like wanton boys, whose pastime is their care,
We follow after bubbles blown in th' air.
Pleasure of life, what is't? only the good hours
Of an ague; merely a preparative to rest,
To endure *vexation*. I do not ask

The process of my death; only commend me
To Delio.
Bos. Break, heart!
Ant. And let my son fly the courts of princes. [*Dies.*
Bos. Thou seem'st to have loved Antonio?
Serv. I brought him hither,
To have reconciled him to the Cardinal.
Bos. I do not ask thee that:
Take him up, if thou tender thine own life,
And bear him where the lady Julia
Was wont to lodge. — O my fate moves swift!
I have this Cardinal in the forge already,
Now I'll bring him to th' hammer. O direful misprision!
I will not imitate things glorious,
No more than base; I'll be mine own example. —
On, on, and look thou represent, for silence,
The thing thou bear'st.[n] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V[n]

Enter Cardinal, *with a book*

Card. I am puzzled in a question about hell:
He says, in hell there's one material fire,
And yet it shall not burn all men alike.
Lay him by. How tedious is a guilty conscience!
When I look into the fishponds in my garden,
Methinks I see a thing armed with a rake,
That seems to strike at me. —

Enter BOSOLA, *and* Servant *bearing* ANTONIO'S *body*

Now, art thou come?
Thou look'st ghastly;
There sits in thy face some great determination,
Mixed with some fear.

Bos. Thus it lightens into action:
I am come to kill thee.
Card. Ha! help! our guard!
Bos. Thou art deceived;
They are out of thy howling.
Card. Hold; and I will faithfully divide
Revenues with thee.
Bos. Thy prayers and proffers
Are both unseasonable.
Card. Raise the watch! we are betrayed!
Bos. I have confined your flight:
I'll suffer your retreat to Julia's chamber,
But no further.
Card. Help! we are betrayed!

Enter MALATESTE, PESCARA, RODERIGO, *and* GRISOLAN, *above*

Mal. Listen!
Card. My dukedom for rescue!
Rod. Fie upon his counterfeiting!
Mal. Why, 'tis not the Cardinal.
Rod. Yes, yes, 'tis he:
But I'll see him hanged ere I'll go down to him.
Card. Here's a plot upon me; I am assaulted! I am lost,
Unless some rescue!
Gris. He doth this pretty well;
But it will not serve to laugh me out of mine honour.
Card. The sword's at my throat!
Rod. You would not bawl so loud then.
Mal. Come, come, let's go to bed: he told us thus much aforehand.
Pes. He wished you should not come at him; but believe't,
The accent of the voice sounds not in jest:

I'll down to him, howsoever, and with engines
Force ope the doors. [*Exit.*

Rod. Let's follow him aloof,
And note how the Cardinal will laugh at him.

[*Exeunt, above,* MALATESTE, RODERIGO, *and* GRISOLAN.

Bos. There's for you first,
'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door
To let in rescue. [*He kills the* Servant.

Card. What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

Bos. Look there.

Card. Antonio!

Bos. Slain by my hand unwittingly:
Pray, and be sudden: when thou killed'st thy sister,
Thou took'st from Justice her most equal balance,
And left her nought but her sword.

Card. O mercy!

Bos. Now it seems thy greatness was only outward;
For thou fall'st faster of thyself than calamity
Can drive thee: I'll not waste longer time; there!
[*Stabs him.*

Card. Thou hast hurt me.

Bos. Again!

Card. Shall I die like a leveret,
Without any resistance? Help, help, help!
I am slain!

Enter FERDINAND

Ferd. Th' alarum! give me a fresh horse;
Rally the vaunt-guard, or the day is lost!
Yield, yield: I give you the honours of arms,
Shake my sword over you; will you yield?

Card. Help me, I am your brother!

Ferd. The devil!
My brother fight upon the adverse party!

[*He wounds the* Cardinal, *and* (*in the scuffle*) *gives* BOSOLA *his death wound.*

There flies your ransom.

Card. O justice!
I suffer now for what hath former been:[n]
Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.

Ferd. Now you're brave fellows. Cæsar's fortune was harder than Pompey's; Cæsar died in the arms of prosperity, Pompey at the feet of disgrace. You both died in the field. The pain's nothing: pain many times is taken away with the apprehension of greater, as the toothache with the sight of a barber that comes to pull it out: there's philosophy for you.

Bos. Now my revenge is perfect. Sink, thou main cause [*He stabs* FERDINAND.
Of my undoing. The last part of my life
Hath done me best service.

Ferd. Give me some wet hay, I am broken-winded.
I do account this world but a dog-kennel:
I will vault credit[n] and affect high pleasures,
Beyond death.

Bos. He seems to come to himself,
Now he's so near the bottom.

Ferd. My sister, O my sister! there's the cause on't.
Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust,
Like diamonds, we are cut with our own dust. [*Dies.*

Card. Thou hast thy payment too.

Bos. Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth;
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid
Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

Enter PESCARA *and the others*

Pes. How now, my lord!
Mal. O sad disaster!
Rod. How comes this?
Bos. Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi, murdered

By the Arragonian brethren; for Antonio,
Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia,
Poisoned by this man; and lastly for myself,
That was an actor in the main of all
Much 'gainst mine own good nature, yet i'th' end
Neglected.

Pes. How now, my lord!

Card. Look to my brother:
He gave us these large wounds, as we were struggling
Here i'th' rushes.[n] And now, I pray, let me
Be laid by and never thought of. [*Dies.*

Pes. How fatally, it seems, he did withstand
His own rescue!

Mal. Thou wretched thing of blood,
How came Antonio by his death?

Bos. In a mist: I know not how:
Such a mistake as I have often seen
In a play. O, I am gone!
We are only like dead walls, or vaulted graves,
That ruined, yield no echo. Fare you well.
It may be pain, but no harm to me to die,
In so good a quarrel. O this gloomy world!
In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,
Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!
Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust
To suffer death or shame for what is just:
Mine is another voyage. [*Dies.*

Pes. The noble Delio, as I came to th' palace,
Told me of Antonio's being here, and showed me
A pretty gentleman, his son and heir.

Enter DELIO, *and* ANTONIO'S Son

Mal. O sir, you come too late!

Delio. I heard so, and
Was armed for't, ere I came. Let us make noble use
Of this great ruin; and join all our force

To establish this young hopeful gentleman
In's mother's right. These wretched eminent things
Leave no more fame behind 'em, than should one
Fall in a frost,[n] and leave his print in snow;
As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,
Both form and matter. I have ever thought
Nature doth nothing so great for great men,
As when she's pleased to make them lords of truth:
Integrity of life is fame's best friend,
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.

[*Exeunt.*

APPIUS AND VIRGINIA

APPIUS AND VIRGINIA

THE story of Appius and Virginia, which forms the central plot of Webster's play on this subject, is a fairly well-authenticated tale connected with the fall of the decemvirate. (See Mommsen's *History of Rome*, I. 367). The story has proved attractive to writers of different periods and nations. It appears as the first novel of the nineteenth day in Ser Giovanni Fiorentino's *Pecorone*, which dates from 1378; and about two hundred years later in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, where so many of the good stories of the world are to be found The first drama on the story in English appeared in 1575. To this Webster is indebted to a considerable extent. The probable date of Webster's play is about 1624. Since this date the material has been treated dramatically a number of times, never with more melodramatic power than in the *Virginius* of Sheridan Knowles, 1820.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

VIRGINIUS, a Roman Commander.
APPIUS CLAUDIUS, a Roman Plebeian, chosen one of the Decemviri.
MINUTIUS, OPPIUS, } Roman Senators.
MARCUS CLAUDIUS, Secretary to APPIUS.
NUMITORIUS, Brother to VIRGINIUS.
ICILIUS, a Roman Noble, betrothed to VIRGINIA.
VALERIUS, a Lieutenant.
HORATIUS, Friend to VIRGINIUS.
SERTORIUS, Servant to ICILIUS.
CORBULO, a Clown.
Two Cousins of APPIUS.
An Advocate.
A Roman Officer.
Senators, Lictors, Soldiers, Musicians, Petitioners, Servants.

VIRGINIA, Daughter to VIRGINIUS.
JULIA, CALPHURNIA, } Friends to VIRGINIA.
Nurse.

SCENE — ROME and the Camp before ALGIDUM

APPIUS AND VIRGINIA

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I[a]

Enter MINUTIUS, OPPIUS, *and* Lictors

Min. Is Appius sent for, that we may acquaint him
With the decree o' th' Senate?
Lict. He is, my lord,
And will attend your lordships presently.
Opp. Lictor, did you tell him that our business
Was from the Senate?
Lict. I did, my lord; and here he is at hand.

Enter APPIUS, *his two* Cousins, *and* MARCUS

Appius. My lords, your pleasure?
Min. Appius, the Senate greet you well,
And by us do signify unto you,
That they have chosen you one of the Decemviri.
Appius. My lords, far be it from the thoughts
Of so poor a plebeian, as your unworthy servant
Appius, to soar so high: the dignity of so
Eminent a place would require a person
Of the best parts and blood in Rome.
My lords, he that must steer at the head
Of an empire, ought to be the mirror of the times,
For wisdom and for policy; and therefore,
I would beseech the Senate to elect one
Worthy of the place, and not to think of
One so unfit as Appius.
Min. My lord, my lord, you dally with your wits.

I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them.[n]
You are wise, and play the modest courtier right,
To make so many bits of your delight.
Opp. But you must know, what we have once concluded,
Cannot, for any private man's affection,
Be slighted. Take your choice, then, with best judgement,
Of these two proffers; either to accept
The place proposed you, or be banished Rome
Immediately. — Lictors, make way. — We expect
Your speedy resolution. [*Exeunt* OPPIUS, MINUTIUS.
First Cous. Noble cousin,
You wrong yourself extremely to refuse
So eminent a place.
Second Cous. It is a means
To raise your kindred. Who shall dare t' oppose
Himself against our family, when yonder[n]
Shall sit your power and frown?
Appius. Or banished Rome!
I pray forbear a little. — Marcus.
Marcus. Sir.
Appius. How dost thou like my cunning?
Marcus. I protest
I was be-agued, fearing lest the Senate
Should have accepted at your feigned refusal.
See, how your kindred and your friends are mustered
To warm them at your sunshine. Were you now
In prison, or arraigned before the Senate
For some suspect of treason, all these swallows
Would fly your stormy winter; not one sing;
Their music is [in] the summer and the spring.
Appius. Thou observ'st shrewdly. Well, I'll fit them for't.[n]
I must be one of the Decemviri,
Or banished Rome? banished! laugh, my trusty Marcus;
I am enforced to my ambition.
I have heard of cunning footmen that have worn

Shoes made of lead some ten days 'fore a race,
To give them nimble and more active feet:
So great men should, that aspire eminent place,[n]
Load themselves with excuse and faint denial,
That they with more speed may perform the trial.
" Mark his humility," says one, " how far
His dreams are from ambition:" says another,
" He would not show his eloquence, lest that
Should draw him into office:" and a third
Is meditating on some thrifty suit
To beg 'fore dinner. Had I as many hands
As had Briareus, I'd extend them all
To catch this office; 'twas my sleep's disturber,
My diet's ill digestion, my melancholy,
Past physic's cure.

Enter OPPIUS, MINUTIUS, *and* Lictors

Marcus. The senators return.
Min. My lord, your answer?
Appius. To obey, my lord, and to know how to rule,
Do differ much; to obey, by nature comes,
But to command, by long experience.
Never were great men in so eminent place
Without their shadows.[n] Envy will attend
On greatness till this general frame[n] takes end.
'Twixt these extremes of state and banishment,
My mind hath held long conflict, and at last
I thus return my answer: noble friends,[n]
We now must part; necessity of state
Compels it so;
I must inhabit now a place unknown;
You see't compels me leave you. Fare you well.
First Cous. To banishment, my lord?
Appius. I am given up
To a long travail full of fear and danger;
To waste the day *in* sweat, and the cold night

In a most desolate contemplation;
Banished from all my kindred and my friends;
Yea, banished from myself; for I accept
This honourable calling.
Min. Worthy Appius,
The gods conduct you hither![n] Lictors, his robes.
Second Cous. We are made for ever; noble kinsman,
'Twas but to fright us.
Appius. But, my loving kinsmen,
Mistake me not; for what I spake was true,
Bear witness all the gods: I told you first,
I was to inhabit in a place unknown:
'Tis very certain, for this reverend seat
Receives me as a pupil; rather gives
Ornament to the person, than our person
The least of grace to it. I showed you next
I am to travail;[n] 'tis a certain truth:
Look! by how much the labour of the mind
Exceeds the body's, so far am I bound
With pain and industry, beyond the toil
Of those that sweat in war; beyond the toil
Of any artisan: pale cheeks, and sunk eyes,
A head with watching dizzied, and a hair
Turned white in youth; all these at a dear rate
We purchase speedily that tend a state.
I told you I must leave you; 'tis most true:
Henceforth the face of a barbarian
And yours shall be all one; henceforth I'll know you
But only by your virtue: brother or father,
In dishonest suit, shall be to me
As is the branded slave. Justice should have
No kindred, friends, nor foes, nor hate, nor love;
As free from passion as the gods above.
I was your friend and kinsman, now your judge;
And whilst I hold the scales, a downy feather
Shall as soon turn them as a mass of pearl
Or diamonds.

Marcus. [*Aside.*] Excellent, excellent lapwing!
There's other stuff closed in that subtle breast.
He sings and beats his wings far from his nest.
Appius. So, gentlemen, I take it, here takes end
Your business, my acquaintance: fare you well.
First Cous. Here's a quick change! who did expect this cloud?
Thus men when they grow great do straight grow proud.
Appius. Now to our present business at the camp.
The army that doth winter 'fore Algidum,
Is much distressed we hear: Minutius,
You, with the levies and the little corn
This present dearth will yield, are speedily
To hasten thither; so to appease the mind
Of the intemperate soldier.
Min. I am ready;
The levies do attend me: our lieutenant,
Send on our troops.
Appius. Farewell, Minutius
The gods go with you, and be still at hand
To add a triumph to your bold command. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, *and* VIRGINIA

Num. Noble Icilius, welcome; teach yourself
A bolder freedom here; for, by our love,
Your suit to my fair niece doth parallel
Her kindred's wishes. There's not in all Rome
A man that is by honour more approved,
Nor worthier, were you poor,[n] to be beloved.
Icil. You give me, noble lord, that character
Which I could never yet read in myself:
But from your censure shall I take much care
To adorn it[n] with the faintest ornaments
Of unambitious virtue. Here[n] I hold

My honourable pattern; one whose mind
Appears more like a ceremonious chapel[n]
Full of sweet music, than a thronging presence.[n]
I am confirmed, the court doth make some show
Fairer than else they would do; but her port,
Being simple virtue, beautifies the court.[n]
Virginia. It is a flattery, my lord,
You breathe upon me; and it shows much like
The borrowed painting which some ladies use,
It is not to continue many days;
My wedding garments will outwear this praise.
Num. Thus ladies still foretell the funeral
Of their lord's kindness.

Enter a Servant, *whispers* ICILIUS *in the ear*

But, my lord, what news?
Icil. Virginius, my lord, your noble brother,
Disguised in dust and sweat, is new arrived
Within the city: troops of artisans
Follow his panting horse, and with a strange
Confusèd noise, partly with joy to see him,
Partly with fear for what his haste portends,
They show as if a sudden mutiny
O'erspread the city.
Num. Cousin, take your chamber. [*Exit* VIRGINIA.
What business from the camp?
Icil. Sure, sir, it bears
The form of some great danger; for his horse,
Bloody with spurring, shows as if he came
From forth a battle: never did you see
'Mongst quails[n] or cocks in fight a bloodier heel,
Than that your brother strikes with. In this form
Of o'erspent horseman,[n] having, as it seems,
With the distracting of his news, forgot
House, friends, or change of raiment, he is gone
To th' Senate-house.

Num. Now the gods bring us safety!
The face of this is cloudy; let us haste
To the Senate-house, and there inquire how near
The body moves of this our threatened fear. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter APPIUS *melancholy; after,* MARCUS

Marcus. My lord —
Appius. Thou troublest me.
Marcus. My hand's as ready armed to work your peace,
As my tongue bold to inquire your discontents.
Good my lord, hear me.
Appius. I am at much variance
Within myself; there's discord in my blood;
My powers are all in combat; I have nothing
Left but sedition in me.
Marcus. Trust my bosom
To be the closet of your private griefs:
Believe me, I am uncrannied.[n]
Appius. May I trust thee?
Marcus. As the firm centre to endure the burden
Of your light foot: as you would trust the poles
To bear on them this airy canopy,
And not to fear their shrinking. I am strong,
Fixed and unshaking.
Appius. Art thou? then thine ear:[n] I love.
Marcus. Ha! ha! he!
Appius. Can this my ponderous secrecy
Be in thine ear so light? seems my disturbance
Worthy such scorn that thou derid'st my griefs?
Believe me, Claudius, I am not a twig
That every gust can shake, but 'tis a tempest
That must be able to use violence
On my grown branches. Wherefore laugh'st thou, then?
Marcus. Not that y' are moved; it makes me smile
in scorn

That wise men cannot understand themselves,
Nor know their own proved greatness. Claudius laughs not
To think you love; but that you are so hopeless
Not to presume to enjoy whom you affect.
What's she in Rome your greatness cannot awe,
Or your rich purse purchase? Promises and threats
Are statesmen's lictors to arrest such pleasures
As they would bring within their strict commands:
Why should my lord droop, or deject his eye?
Can you command Rome, and not countermand
A woman's weakness? Let your grace bestow
Your purse and power on me; I'll prostrate you.[n]

Appius. Ask both, and lavish them to purchase me
The rich fee simple of Virginia's heart.

Marcus. Virginia's!

Appius. Her's.

Marcus. I have already found
An easy path which you may safely tread,
Yet no man trace you.

Appius. Thou art my comforter.

Marcus. Her father's busied in our foreign wars,
And there hath chief employment: all their pay
Must your discretion scantle; keep it back;
Restrain it in the common treasury:
Thus may a statesman 'gainst a soldier stand,
To keep his purse weak, whilst you arm his hand.
Her father thus kept low, gifts and rewards
Will tempt the maid the sooner; nay, haply draw
The father in to plead in your behalf.
But should these fail, then siege her virgin tower
With two prevailing engines, fear and power.

Appius. Go, then and prove a speeding advocate:
Arm thee with all our bounty, oratory,
Variety of promise.

Enter VALERIUS

Val. Lord Appius, the Decemvirate entreat

Your voice in this day's Senate. Old Virginius
Craves audience from the camp, with earnest suit
For quick dispatch.

Appius. We will attend the Senate. Claudius, begone. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV[n]

Enter APPIUS, OPPIUS, VALERIUS, NUMITORIUS, *etc.*

Opp. We sent to you to assist us in this counsel
Touching the expeditions of our war.

Appius. Ours is a willing presence to the trouble
Of all state cares. Admit him from the camp.

Enter VIRGINIUS

Opp. Speak the camp's will.

Virginius. The camp wants money; we have store of knocks,
And wounds God's plenty, but we have no pay:
This three months did we never house our heads,
But in yon great star-chamber![n] never bedded
But in the cold field-beds; our victual fails us,
Yet meet with no supply; we're fairly promised,
But soldiers cannot feed on promises;
All our provant apparel's torn to rags,
And our munition fails us. Will you send us
To fight for Rome like beggars? Noble gentlemen,
Are you the high state of Decemviri,
That have those things in manage? Pity us,
For we have need on't. Let not your delays
Be cold to us, whose bloods have oft been heated
To gain you fame and riches. Prove not to us
(Being our friends) worse foes than we fight with:
Let's not be starved in kindness. Sleep you now

Upon the bench, when your deaf ears should listen
Unto the wretchless clamours of the poor?
Then would I had my drums here, they might rattle,
And rouse you to attendance. Most grave fathers,
Show yourselves worthy stewards to our mother,
Fair Rome, to whom we are no bastard sons,
Though we be soldiers. She hath in her store
Food to maintain life in the camp, as well
As surfeit for the city. Do not save
The foe a labour: send us some supply,
Lest, ere they kill us, we by famine die.

Appius. Shall I, my lords, give answer to this soldier?

Opp. Be you the city's voice.

Appius. Virginius, we would have you thus possessed:
We sit not here to be prescribed and taught,
Nor to have any suitor give us limit,
Whose power admits no curb. Next know, Virginius,
The camp's our servant, and must be disposed,
Controlled, and used by us, that have the strength
To knit it, or dissolve it. When we please,
Out of our princely grace and clemency,
To look upon your wants, it may be then
We shall redress them: but till then, it fits not
That any petty fellow waged by us
Should have a tongue sound here, before a bench
Of such grave auditors. Further —

Virginius. Pray give me leave:
Not here! Pray, Appius, is not this the judgement-seat?
Where should a poor man's cause be heard but here?
To you the statists of long-flourishing Rome,
To you I call, if you have charity,
If you be human, and not quite given o'er
To furs and metal;[n] if you be Romans,
If you have any soldier's blood at all
Flow in your veins, help with your able arms
To prop a sinking camp: an infinite[n]
Of fair Rome's sons, cold, weak, hungry, and clotheless,

Would feed upon your surfeit: will you save them,
Or shall they perish?
Appius. What we will, we will;
Be that your answer: perhaps at further leisure
We'll help you; not your merit, but our pleasure.
Virginius. I will not curse thee, Appius; but I wish
Thou wert i' th' camp amongst the mutineers
To tell my answers, not to trouble me.
Make you us dogs, yet not allow us bones?
O, what are soldiers come to! Shall your camp,
The strength of all your peace, and the iron wall
That rings this pomp in from invasive steel,
Shall that decay? Then let the foreign fires
Climb o'er these buildings; let the sword and slaughter
Chase the gowned Senate through the streets of Rome,
To double-dye their robes in scarlet[n]: let
The enemy's stripped arm have his crimsoned brawns
Up to the elbows in your traitorous blood;
Let Janus' temple be devolved,[n] your treasures
Ripped up to pay the common adversaries
With our due wages. Do you look for less?
The rottenness of this misgoverned state
Must grow to some disease, incurable
Save with a sack or slaughter.
Appius. Y' are too bold.
Virginius. Know you our extremities?
Appius. We do.
Virginius. And will not help them?
Appius. Yes.
Virginius. When?
Appius. Hereafter.
Virginius. Hereafter! when so many gallant spirits
That yet may stand betwixt you and destruction,
Are sunk in death? Hereafter! when disorder
Hath swallowed all our forces?
Appius. We'll hear no more.

Opp. Peace, fellow, peace! know the Decemviri,
And their authority; we shall commit you else.
Virginius. Do so, and I shall thank you; be relieved,
And have a strong house o'er me; fear no alarms
Given in the night by any quick perdue.[n]
Your guilty in the city feeds more dainty
Than doth your general. 'Tis a better office
To be an under-keeper than a captain.
The gods of Rome amend it!
Appius. Break up the Senate.
Virginius. And shall I have no answer?
Appius. So, farewell. [*Exeunt all but* VIRGINIUS.
Virginius. What slave would be a soldier, to be censured
By such as ne'er saw danger? to have our pay,
Our worths, and merits, balanced in the scale
Of base moth-eaten peace? I have had wounds
Would have made all this bench faint and look pale,
But to behold them searched.[n] They lay their heads
On their soft pillows, pore upon their bags,[n]
Grow fat with laziness and resty ease;
And us that stand betwixt them and disaster,
They will not spare a drachma. O! my soldiers,
Before you want, I'll sell my small possessions
Even to my skin to help you; plate and jewels,
All shall be yours. Men that are men indeed,
The earth shall find,[n] the sun and air must feed.

Enter NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, VALERIUS, *and* VIRGINIA

Num. Your daughter, noble brother, hearing late
Of your arrival from the camp, most humbly
Prostrates her filial duty.
Virginius. Daughter, rise:
And brother, I am only rich in her,
And in your love, linked with the honoured friendship
Of those fair Roman lords. For you, Icilius,

I hear I must adopt you with the title
Of a new son; you are Virginia's chief;
And I am proud she hath built her fair election
Upon such store of virtues. May you grow,
Although a city's child, to know a soldier,
And rate him to his merit.
Icil. Noble father,
(For henceforth I shall only use that name)
Our meeting was to urge you to the process
Of our fair contract.[n]
Virginius. Witness, gentlemen,
Here I give up a father's interest,
But not a father's love; that I will ever
Wear next my heart, for it was born with her,
And grows still with my age.
Num. Icilius,
Receive her: witness, noble gentlemen.
Val. With all my heart. I would Icilius could
Do as much for me; but Rome affords not such
Another Virginia.
Virginia. I am my father's daughter, and by him
I must be swayed in all things.
Num. Brother, this happy contract asks a feast,
As a thing due to such solemnities:
It shall be at my house, where we this night
Will sport away some hours.
Virginius. I must to horse.
Num. What, ride to-night!
Virginius. Must see the camp to-night:
'Tis full of trouble and distracted fears,
And may grow mutinous: I am bent to ride.
Val. To-night!
Virginius. I am engaged: short farewells now must serve;
The universal business calls me hence,
That toucheth a whole people. Rome, I fear,
Thou wilt *pay use for* what thou dost forbear.[n]
\Exeunt.

ACT THE SECOND

SCENE I[n]

Enter Clown, *whispering* VIRGINIA; *after her* MARCUS *with presents*

Virginia. Sirrah, go tell Calphurnia I am walking
To take the air: entreat her company;
Say I attend her coming.

Clown. Madam, I shall: but if you could walk abroad, and get an heir,[n] it were better; for your father hath a fair revenue, and never a son to inherit.

Virginia. You are, sirrah ——

Clown. Yes, I am sirrah; but not the party that is born to do that: though I have no lordships, yet I have so much manners to give my betters place.

Virginia. Whom mean you by your betters?

Clown. I hope I have learnt to know the three degrees of comparison: for though I be *bonus*, and you *melior* as well as *mulier*,[n] yet my lord Icilius is *optimus*.

Virginia. I see there's nothing in such private done, but you must inquire after.

Clown. And can you blame us, madam, to long for the merry day, as you do for the merry night?

Virginia. Will you be gone, sir?

Clown. O yes, to my lady Calphurnia's; I remember my errand. [*Exit.*

Virginia. My father's wondrous pensive, and withal
With a suppressed rage left his house displeased,
And so in post is hurried to the camp:
It sads me much; to expel which melancholy,
I have sent for company.

Enter MARCUS *and* Musicians

Marcus. This opportunity was subtly waited:
It is the best part of a politician,
When he would compass aught to fame his industry,[n]
Wisely to wait the advantage of the hours;
His happy minutes are not always present.
Express your greatest art;[n] Virginia hears you. [*Song.*
Virginia. O, I conceive the occasion of this harmony:
Icilius sent it; I must thank his kindness.
Marcus. Let not Virginia rate her contemplation
So high, to call this visit an intrusion;
For when she understands I took my message
From one that did compose it with affection,
I know she will not only extend pardon,
But grace it with her favour.
Virginia. You mediate excuse for courtesies,[n]
As if I were so barren of civility,
Not to esteem it worthy of my thanks;
Assure yourself I could be longer patient
To hear my ears so feasted.
Marcus. Join all your voices till you make the air
Proud to usurp your notes,[n] and to please her
With a sweet echo; serve Virginia's pleasure. — [*Song.*
As you have been so full of gentleness
To hear with patience what was brought to serve you,
So hearken with your usual clemency
To the relation of a lover's sufferings.
Your figure still does revel in his dreams,
He banquets on your memory, yet finds
Not thoughts enough to satisfy his wishes;
As if Virginia had composed his heart,
And filled it with her beauty.
Virginia. I see he is a miser in his wishes,
And thinks he never has enough of that
Which only he possesses: but, to give
His wishes *satisfaction*, let him know

His heart and mine do dwell so near together,
That hourly they converse and guard each other.
Marcus. Is fair Virginia confident she knows
Her favour dwells with the same man I plead for?
Virginia. Unto Icilius.
Marcus. Worthy fair one,
I would not wrong your worth so to employ
My language for a man so much beneath
The merit of your beauty: he I plead for
Has power to make your beauty populous;[n]
Your frown shall awe the world; and in your smile
Great Rome shall build her happiness;
Honour and wealth shall not be styled companions,
But servants to your pleasure:
Then shall Icilius, but a refined citizen,[n]
Boast your affection, when lord Appius loves you?
Virginia. Bless his great lordship! I was much mistaken.
Let thy lord know, thou advocate of lust,
All the intentions of that youth are honourable,
Whilst his are filled with sensuality:
And for a final resolution know,
Our hearts in love, like twins, alike shall grow. [*Exit.*
Marcus. Had I a wife or daughter that could please him,
I would devote her to him; but I must
Shadow[n] this scorn, and soothe him still in lust. [*Exit.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter Six Soldiers

First Soldier. What news yet of Virginius' return?
Second Soldier. Not any.
First Soldier. O, the misery of soldiers!
They doubly starve us with fair promises.
We spread the earth like hail, or new-reaped corn

In this fierce famine; and yet patiently
Make our obedience the confinèd jail
That starves us.
Third Soldier. Soldiers, let us draw our swords
While we have strength to use them.
First Soldier. 'Tis a motion
Which nature and necessity commands.

Enter MINUTIUS

Min. Y'are of Virginius' regiment?
Omnes. We are.
Min. Why do you swarm in troops thus? To your quarter!
Is our command grown idle? To your trench!
Come, I'll divide you: this your conference
Is not without suspect of mutiny.
First Soldier. Soldiers, shall I relate the grievances
Of the whole regiment?
Omnes. Boldly.
First Soldier. Then thus, my lord —
Min. Come, I will not hear thee.
First Soldier. Sir, you shall.
Sound all the drums and trumpets in the camp,
To drown my utterance, yet above them all
I'll rear our just complaint. Stir not, my lord!
I vow you are not safe, if you but move
A sinew till you hear us.
Min. Well, sir, command us;
You are the general.
First Soldier. No, my lord, not I;
I am almost starved; I wake in the wet trench,
Loaded with more cold iron than a jail
Would give a murderer, while the general
Sleeps in a field-bed, and to mock our hunger
Feeds us with scent of the most curious fare
That makes his tables crack; our pay detained

By those that are our leaders; and, at once,
We in this sad, and unpreparèd plight,
With the enemy and famine daily fight.
Min. Do you threaten us?
Omnes. Sir, you shall hear him out.
First Soldier. You send us whips, and iron manacles,
And shackles plenty, but the devil a coin.
Would you teach us that cannibal trick, my lord,
Which some rich men i' th' city oft do use;
Shall's one devour another?
Min. Will you hear me?
First Soldier. O Rome, th' art grown a most unnatural mother,
To those have held thee by the golden locks
From sinking into ruin! Romulus
Was fed by a she-wolf, but now our wolves
Instead of feeding us devour our flesh,
Carouse our blood,[n] yet are not drunk with it,
For three parts of 't is water.
Min. Your captain
Noble Virginius, is sent to Rome
For ease of all your grievances.
First Soldier. 'Tis false.
Omnes. Aye, 'tis false.
First Soldier. He's stoln away from 's never to return:
And now his age will suffer him no more
Deal on the enemy, belike he'll turn
An usurer, and in the city air
Cut poor men's throats at home,[n] sitting in's chair.
Min. You wrong one of the honourablest commanders.
Omnes. Honourable commander!
First Soldier. Commander! aye, my lord, there goes the thrift:
In victories, the general and commanders
Share all the honour, as they share the spoil;
But in our overthrows, where lies the blame?

The common soldier's fault — ours is the shame.
What is the reason, that being so far distant
From the affrighted enemy, we lie
I' th' open field, subject to the sick humours
Of heaven and earth, unless you could bestow
Two summers[n] on us? Shall I tell you truth?
You account the expense of engines, and of swords,
Of horses and of armour dearer far,
Than soldiers' lives.
Omnes. Now, by the gods, you do.
First Soldier. Observe you not the ravens and the crows
Have left the city surfeit, and with us
They make full banquets. Come, you birds of death,
And fill your greedy crops with human flesh;
Then to the city fly, disgorge it there
Before the Senate, and from thence arise
A plague to choke all Rome!
Omnes. And all the suburbs!
Min. Upon a soldier's word, bold gentlemen,
I expect every hour Virginius
To bring fresh comfort.
Omnes. Whom? Virginius?
First Soldier. Now, by the gods, if ever he return,
We'll drag him to the slaughter by his locks,
Turned white with riot and incontinence,
And leave a precedent to all the world,
How captains use their soldiers!

Enter VIRGINIUS

Min. See, he's returned.
Virginius, you are not safe; retire,
Your troops are mutinous; we are begirt
With enemies more daring, and more fierce,
Than is the common foe.
Virginius. My troops, my lord\

Min. Your life is threatened by these desperate men;
Betake you to your horse.
Virginius. My noble lord,
I never yet professed to teach the art
Of flying. Ha! our troops grown mutinous!
He dares not look on me with half a face
That spread this wildfire. Where is our lieutenant?

Enter VALERIUS

Val. My lord.
Virginius. Sirrah, order our companies.
Min. What do you mean, my lord?
Virginius. Take air a little, they have heated me.
Sirrah, is't you will mutiny?
Third Soldier. Not I, sir.
Virginius. Is your gall burst,[n] you traitor?
Fourth Soldier. The gods defend, sir!
Virginius. Or is your stomach sea-sick? doth it rise?
I'll make a passage for it.
Fifth Soldier. Noble captain, I'll die beneath your foot.
Virginius. You rough porcupine, ha!
Do you bristle, do you shoot your quills,[n] you rogue?
First Soldier. They have no points to hurt you, noble captain.
Virginius. Was't you, my nimble shaver, that would whet
Your sword 'gainst your commander's throat, you sirrah?
Sixth Soldier. My lord, I never dreamed on't.
Virginius. Slaves and cowards,
What, are you choleric now? By the gods,
The way to purge it were to let you blood!
I am i' th' centre of you, and I'll make
The proudest of you teach the aspen leaf
To tremble, when I breathe.
Min. A strange conversion.

Virginius. Advance your pikes! [n] the word!
Omnes. Advance your pikes!
Virginius. See, noble lord, these are no mutineers,
These are obedient soldiers, civil men:
You shall command these, if your lordship please,
To fill a ditch up with their slaughtered bodies,
That with more ease you may assault some town.
So, now lay down your arms! Villains and traitors,
I here cashier you: hence! from me, my poison!
Not worthy of our discipline: go beg,
Go beg, you mutinous rogues! brag of the service
You ne'er durst look on: it were charity
To hang you, for my mind gives y'are reserved
To rob poor market women.
Min. O Virginius!
Virginius. I do beseech you to confirm my sentence,
As you respect me. I will stand myself
For the whole regiment; and safer far
In mine own single valour, than begirt
With cowards and with traitors.
Min. O my lord! you are too severe.
Virginius. Now, by the gods, my lord,
You know no discipline, to pity them.
Precious devils! no sooner my back turned,
But presently to mutiny.
Omnes. Dear captain!
Virginius. Refuse me! [n] if such traitorous rogues
Would not confound an army. When do you march?
When do you march, gentlemen?
First Soldier. My lord, we'll starve first;
We'll hang first; by the gods, do anything,
Ere we'll forsake you.
Min. Good Virginius,
Limit your passion.
Virginius. Sir, you may take my place,
Not my just anger from me. These are they
Have bred a dearth i' th' camp: I'll wish our foes

No greater plague than to have their company.
Show but among them all so many scars
As stick upon this flesh, I'll pardon them.
Min. How now, my lord, breathless?
Virginius. By your favour. I ha' said —
Mischiefs confound me! if I could not wish
My youth renewed again, with all her follies,
Only t'have breath enough to rail against
These — 'tis too short.
Min. See, gentlemen, what strange distraction
Your falling off from duty hath begot
In this most noble soldier: you may live,
The meanest of you, to command a troop,
And then in others you'll correct those faults,
Which in yourselves you cherished: every captain
Bears in his private government that form,
Which kings should o'er their subjects, and to them
Should be the like obedient.[n] We confess
You have been distressed; but can you justly challenge
Any commander that hath surfeited,
While that your food was limited? You cannot.
Virginius. My lord, I have shared with them an equal fortune,
Hunger and cold, marched thorough watery fens,
Borne as great burdens as the pioner,
When scarce the ground would bear me.
Min. Good my lord, give us leave to proceed.
The punishment your captain hath inflicted
Is not sufficient; for it cannot bring
Any example to succeeding times
Of penance worth your faulting: happily,
It may in you beget a certain shame;
But it will in others a strong hope
Of the like lenity. Yet, gentlemen,
You have in one thing given me such a taste
Of your obedience: when the fire was raised
Of fierce sedition, and the cheek was swollen

To sound the fatal trumpet, then the sight
Of this your worthy captain did disperse
All those unfruitful humours, and even then
Convert you from fierce tigers to staid men:
We therefore pardon you, and do restore
Your captain to you, you unto your captain.
Omnes. The gods requite you, noble general.
Min. My lord, my lord!
Omnes. Your pardon, noble captain.
Virginius. Well, you are the general, and the fault is quit;
A soldier's tears, an elder brother's wit,
Have little salt in them, nor do they season
Things worth observing, for their want of reason.
Take up your arms and use them, do, I pray;
Ere long, you'll take your legs to run away.
Min. And what supply from Rome?
Virginius. Good store of corn.
Min. What entertainment there?
Virginius. Most honourable,
Especially by the lord Appius.
There is great hope that Appius will grow
The soldier's patron: with what vehemency
He urged our wants, and with what expedition
He hasted the supplies, it is almost
Incredible. There's promised to the soldier,
Besides their corn, a bounteous donative; [*A shout.*
But 'tis not cetain yet when 't shall be paid.
Min. How for your own particular?
Virginius. My lord,
I was not entered fully two pikes' length
Into the Senate, but they all stood bare,
And each man offered me his seat. The business
For which I went dispatched, what gifts, what favours
Were done me, your good lordship shall not hear,
For you would wonder at them; only this,
'Twould make a man fight up to th' neck in blood,

To think how nobly he shall be received
When he returns to th' city.
Min. 'Tis well;
Give order the provision be divided,
And sent to every quarter.
Virginius. Sir, it shall. —
[*Aside.*] Thus men must slight their wrongs, or else conceal them,
When general safety wills us not reveal them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter Two Petitioners *at one door; at the other* MARCUS

First Pet. Pray, is your lord at leisure?
Marcus. What is your suit?
First Pet. To accept this poor petition, which makes known
My many wrongs, in which I crave his justice,
And upright sentence to support my cause,
Which else is trod down by oppression.
Marcus. My lord's hand is the prop of innocence,
And if your cause be worthy his supportance,
It cannot fall.
First Pet. The gods of Rome protect him!
Marcus. What is your paper, too, petitionary?
Second Pet. It leans upon the justice of the judge,
Your noble lord, the very stay of Rome.
Marcus. And surer basis, for a poor man's cause,
She cannot yield. Your papers I'll deliver,
And when my lord ascends the judgement-seat,
You shall find gracious comfort.

Enter ICILIUS *troubled*

Icil. Where's your lord?
Marcus. [*Aside.*] Icilius! fair Virginia's late betrothed.

Icil. Your ears, I hope, you have not forfeited,
That you return no answer: where's your lord?
Marcus. At 's study.
Icil. I desire admittance to him.
Marcus. Please you attend, I'll know his lordship's pleasure. —
[*Aside.*] Icilius! I pray Heaven she have not blabbed.
[*Exit.*
Icil. Attend! A petty lawyer t'other day,
Glad of a fee, but called to eminent place,
Even to his betters now the word 's *attend.*
This gownèd office, what a breadth it bears!
How many tempests wait upon his frown!

Enter MARCUS

Marcus. All the petitioners withdraw.
[*Exeunt* Petitioners.
Lord Appius
Must have this place more private, as a favour
Reserved for you, Icilius. Here's my lord.

Enter APPIUS *with* Lictors *afore him*

Appius. Begone; this place is only spared for us;
And you, Icilius: now your business.
Icil. May I speak it freely?
Appius. We have suffering ears,
A heart the softest down may penetrate:
Proceed.
Icil. My lord —
Appius. We are private; pray your courtesy.
Icil. My duty —
Appius. Leave that to th' public eye
Of Rome, and of Rome's people. Claudius, there!
Marcus. My lord.

Appius. Place me a second chair; that done,
Remove yourself. So, now your absence, Claudius.
[*Exit* MARCUS.
Icilius, sit; this grace we make not common
Unto the noblest Roman, but to you
Our love affords it freely. Now your suit?
Icil. It is, you would be kind unto the camp.
Appius. Wherein, Icilius, doth the camp touch thee?
Icil. Thus: old Virginius, now my father-in-law,
Kept from the public pay, consumes himself,
Sells his revenues, turns his plate to coin,
To wage his soldiers, and supply the camp;
Wasting that useful substance which indeed
Should rise to me, as my Virginia's dowry.
Appius. We meet that opposition thus, Icilius:
The camp's supplies doth not consist in us,
But those that keep the common Treasury;
Speak or entreat we may, but not command.
But, sir, I wonder you, so brave a youth,
Son to a thrifty Roman, should ally you,
And knit your strong arms to such falling branches;
Which rather in their ruin will bear down
Your strength, than you support their rottenness.
Be swayed by me; fly from that ruinous house,
Whose fall may crush you, and contract with mine,
Whose bases are of marble, deeply fixed
To maugre all gusts and impending storms.
Cast off that beggar's daughter, poor Virginia,
Whose dowry and beauty I'll see trebled both,
In one allied to me. Smile you, Icilius?
Icil. My lord, my lord, think you I can imagine
Your close and sparing hand can be profuse
To give that man a palace, whom you late
Denied a cottage? Will you from your own coffers
Grant me a treble dowry, yet interpose me
A poor third from the common Treasury?
You must move me by possibilities,

For I have brains: give first your hand and seal,
That old Virginius shall receive his pay,
Both for himself and soldiers, and that done,
I shall perhaps be soon induced to think
That you, who with such willingness did that —
Appius. Is my love misprized?
Icil. Not to Virginia.
Appius. Virginia!
Icil. Yes, Virginia, lustful lord.
I did but trace your cunning all this while:
You would bestow me on some Appian trull,
And for that dross to cheat me of my gold:
For this the camp pines, and the city smarts.
All Rome fares worse for thy incontinence.
Appius. Mine, boy!
Icil. Thine, judge. This hand hath intercepted
Thy letters, and perused thy tempting gifts;
These ears have heard thy amorous passions, wretch!
These eyes beheld thy treacherous name subscribed.
A judge? a devil!
Appius. Come, I'll hear no more.
Icil. Sit still, or by the powerful gods of Rome
I'll nail thee to the chair: but suffer me,
I'll offend nothing but thine ears.
Appius. Our secretary[n] —
Icil. Tempt not a lover's fury; if thou dost,
Now by my vow, insculpt in heaven, I'll send thee —
Appius. You see I am patient.
Icil. But withal revengeless.
Appius. So, say on.
Icil. Hope not of any grace, or the least favour:
I am so covetous of Virginia's love,
I cannot spare thee the least look, glance, touch:
Divide one bare imaginary thought
Into a thousand, thousand parts, and that
I'll not afford thee.
Appius. Thou shalt not.

Icil. Nay, I will not;
Hadst thou a judge's place above those judges
That judge all souls, having power to sentence me
I would not bribe thee, no, not with one hair
From her fair temples.
Appius. Thou should'st not.
Icil. Nay, I would not.
Think not her beauty shall have leave to crown
Thy lustful hopes with the least spark of bliss,
Or have thine ears charmed with the ravishing sound
Even of her harshest phrase.
Appius. I will not.
Icil. Nay, thou shalt not.
She's mine, my soul is crowned in her desire,
To her I'd travel through a land of fire.
Appius. Now, have you done?
Icil. I have spoke my thoughts.
Appius. Then will thy fury give me leave to speak?
Icil. I pray, say on.
Appius. Icilius, I must chide you, and withal
Tell you your rashness hath made forfeiture
Even of your precious life, which we esteem
Too dear to call in question. If I wished you
Of my alliance, graft into my blood,
Condemn you me for that? O, see the rashness
And blind misprision of distempered youth!
As for the maid Virginia, we are far,
Even in least thought, from her; and for those letters,
Tokens, and presents, we acknowledge none.
Alas! though great in place, we are not gods:
If any false impostor hath usurped
Our hand or greatness in his own behoof,
Can we help that? Icilius, there's our hand,
Your rashness we remit; let's have hereafter
Your love and best opinion. For your suit,
Repair to us at both our better leisures,
We'll breathe in it new life.

Icil. I crave your pardon.
Appius. Granted ere craved, my good Icilius.
Icil. Morrow.[n]
Appius. It is no more indeed.[n] Morrow, Icilius.
If any of our servants wait without,
Command them in.
Icil. I shall.
Appius. Our secretary;
We have use for him; Icilius, send him hither:
Again, good-morrow. [*Exit* ICILIUS.
Go to thy death, thy life is doomed and cast.
Appius, be circumspect, and be not rash
In blood, as th' art in lust: be murderous still;
But when thou strik'st, with unseen weapons kill.

Enter MARCUS

Marcus. My honourable lord.
Appius. Deride me, dog!
Marcus. Who hath stirred up this tempest in your brow?
Appius. Not you? fie! you.
Marcus. All you Panthean gods[n]
Confound me, if my soul be accessory
To your distractions!
Appius. To send a ruffian hither,
Even to my closet; first, to brave my greatness,
Play with my beard, revile me, taunt me, hiss me;
Nay, after all these deep disparagements,
Threat me with steel, and menace me, unarmed,
To nail me to my seat if I but moved:
All these are slight, slight toys!
Marcus. Icilius do this?
Appius. Ruffian Icilius: he that in the front
Of a smooth citizen bears the rugged soul
Of a most base banditto.
Marcus. He shall die for't.
Appius. Be not too rash.

Marcus. Were there no more men to support great Rome,
Even falling Rome should perish ere he stand:
I'll after him, and kill him.
Appius. Stay, I charge thee.
Lend me a patient ear: to right our wrongs,
We must not menace with a public hand;
We stand in the world's eye, and shall be taxed
Of the least violence, where we revenge.
We should smile smoothest where our hate's most deep,
And when our spleen's broad waking, seem to sleep.
Let the young man play still upon the bit,
Till we have brought and trained him to our lure;
Great men should strike but once, and then strike sure.
Marcus. Love you Virginia still?
Appius. Do I still live?
Marcus. Then she's your own. Virginius is, you say,
Still in the camp?
Appius. True.
Marcus. Now in his absence will I claim Virginia
To be the daughter of a bondwoman
And slave to me; to prove which, I'll produce
Firm proofs, notes probable,[n] sound witnesses:
Then, having with your Lictors summoned her,
I'll bring the cause before your judgement-seat;
Where, upon my infallid evidence,
You may pronounce the sentence on my side,
And she become your strumpet, not your bride.
Appius. Thou hast a copious brain: but how in this
Shall we dispose Icilius?
Marcus. If he spurn,
Clap him up close; there's ways to charm his spleen.
By this no scandal can redound to you;
The cause is mine; you but the sentencer
Upon that evidence which I shall bring.
The business is, t' have warrants by arrest,[n]
To answer such things at the judgement-bar

As can be laid against her: ere her friends
Can be assembled, ere herself can study
Her answer, or scarce know her cause of summons
To descant on the matter, Appius may
Examine, try, and doom Virginia.
But all this must be sudden.
Appius. Thou art born
To mount me high above Icilius' scorn.
I'll leave it to thy manage. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

SCENE I[n]

Enter Nurse *and the* Clown

Clown. What was that you said, Nurse?

Nurse. Why, I did say thou must bestir thyself.

Clown. I warrant you, I can bestir my stumps as soon as another, if fit occasion be offered: but why do you come upon me in such haste? is it because, Nurse, I should come over you at leisure?

Nurse. Come over me, thou knave; what dost thou mean by that?

Clown. Only this; if you will come off, I will come on.

Nurse. My lord hath strangers to-night: you must make ready the parlour, a table and lights: nay, when,[n] I say?

Clown. Methinks you should rather wish for a bed than for a board, for darkness than for lights; yet I must confess you have been a light woman[n] in your time: but now —

Nurse. But now! what now, you knave?

Clown. But now I'll go fetch the table and some lights presently.

Enter NUMITORIUS, HORATIUS, VALERIUS, *and* ICILIUS

Num. Some lights to usher in these gentlemen.
Clear all the rooms without there. Sit, pray sit.
None interrupt our conference.

Enter VIRGINIA

Ha, who's that?

Nurse. My [foster-] child,[n] if it please you.

Num. Fair Virginia, you are welcome.
The rest forbear us till we call. [*Exeunt* Nurse *and* Clown.
Sweet cousin,
Our business and the cause of our discourse
Admits you to this council: take your place.
Icilius, we are private; now proceed.

Icil. Then thus: lord Appius doth intend me wrong;
And under his smooth calmness cloaks a tempest,
That will ere long break out in violence
On me and on my fortunes.

Num. My good cousin,
You are young, and youth breeds rashness. Can I think
Lord Appius will do wrong, who is all justice;
The most austere and upright censurer
That ever sat upon the awful bench?

Val. Icilius, you are near to me in blood,
And I esteem your safety as mine own:
If you will needs wage eminence and state,
Choose out a weaker opposite, not one
That, in his arm, bears all the strength of Rome.

Num. Besides, Icilius,
Know you the danger, what it is to scandal
One of his place and sway?

Icil. I know it, kinsmen; yet this popular greatness
Can be no bugbear to affright mine innocence.
No, his smooth crest hath cast a palpèd film
Over Rome's eyes. He juggles, — a plain juggler;
Lord Appius is no less.

Num. Nay, then, cousin,
You are too harsh, and I must hear no more.
It ill becomes my place and gravity,
To lend a face to such reproachful terms
'Gainst one of his high presence.

Icil. Sit, pray sit,
To see me draw his picture 'fore your eyes,
To make this man seem monstrous, and this god
Rome so adores, a devil, a plain devil.
This lord, this judge, this Appius, that professeth
To all the world a vestal chastity,
Is an incontinent, loose lecher grown.
Num. Fie, cousin!
Icil. Nay, 'tis true. Daily and l
He tempts this blushing virgin with large promise
With melting words, and presents of high rate,
To be the stale to his unchaste desires.
Omnes. Is't possil
Icil. Possible!
'Tis actual truth; I pray but ask your niece.
Virginia. Most true, I am extremely tirec
wearied
With messages and tokens of his love;
No answer, no repulse will satisfy
The tediousness of his importunate suit.
And whilst I could with modesty and honour,
Without the danger of reproach and shame,
I kept it secret from Icilius;
But when I saw their boldness found no limit,
And they from fair entreaty grew to threats,
I told him all.
Icil. True: understanding which
To him I went.
Val. To Appius?
Icil. To that giant,
The high Colossus that bestrides us all;
I went to him.
Hor. How did you bear yourself?
Icil. Like Appius, at the first, dissemblingly;
But when I saw the coast clear, all withdrawn,
And none but we two in the lobby, then
I drew my poniard, took him by the throat,

And when he would have clamoured, threatened death,
Unless he would with patience hear me out.
Num. Did he, Icilius?
Icil. I made him that he durst not squeak,
Not move an eye, not draw a breath too loud,
Nor stir a finger.
Hor. What succeeded then?
Num. Keep fast the door there! Sweet coz, not too loud.
What then succeeded?
Icil. Why, I told him all;
Gave him his due, called him lascivious judge,
(A thousand things which I have now forgot)
Showed him his hand a witness 'gainst himself,[n]
And everything with such known circumstance,
That he might well excuse, but not deny.
Num. How parted you?
Icil. Why, friends in outward show:
But I perceived his heart: that hypocrite
Was born to gull Rome, and deceive us all.
He swore to me quite to abjure her love;
Yet ere myself could reach Virginia's chamber,
One was before me with regreets from him;
I know his hand. Th' intent of this our meeting
Was to entreat your counsel and advice:
The good old man, her father, is from home;
I think it good that she now in his absence
Should lodge in secret with some private friend,
Where Appius nor his Lictors, those bloodhounds,
Can hunt her out. You are her uncle, sir,
I pray, counsel the best.
Num. To oppose ourselves,
Now in this heat, against so great a man,
Might, in my judgement, to ourselves bring danger,
And to my niece no safety. If we fall,
She cannot stand; let's then preserve ourselves[n]
Until her father be discharged the camp.

Val. And, good Icilius, for your private ends,
And the dear safety of your friends and kindred,
Against that statist spare to use your spleen.
Icil. I will be swayed by you. My lords, 'tis late,
And time to break up conference. Noble uncle,
I am your growing debtor.
Num. Lights without there!
Icil. I will conduct Virginia to her lodging.
Good night to all at once.
Num. The gods of Rome protect you all! and then
We need not fear the envious rage of men. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter MARCUS, *with Four* Lictors

Marcus. Lictors, bestow yourselves in some close shops
About the Forum, till you have the sight
Of fair Virginia; for I understand
This present morning she'll come forth to buy
Some necessaries at the sempsters' shops:
Howe'er accompanied, be it your care
To seize her at our action. Good, my friends,
Disperse yourselves, and keep a careful watch. [*Exit.*
First Lict. 'Tis strange that ladies will not pay their debts.[n]
Second Lict. It were strange, indeed, if that our Roman knights would give them good example, and pay theirs.
First Lict. The calendar that we Lictors go by is all dog-days.
Second Lict. Right; our common hunt is still to dog unthrifts.
First Lict. And what's your book of common prayer?
Second Lict. Faith, only for the increase of riotous young gentlemen i' th' country, and banquerouts i' th' *city.*

First Lict. I know no man more valiant than we are, for we back knights and gentlemen daily.

Second Lict. Right, we have them by the back hourly: your French fly[n] applied to the nape of the neck for the French rheum, is not so sore a drawer as a Lictor.

First Lict. Some say that if a little-timbered fellow would jostle a great loggerhead, let him be sure to lay him i' th' kennel;[n] but when we shoulder a knight, or a knight's fellow, we make him more sure, for we kennel him i' th' counter.[n]

Second Lict. Come, let's about our business.

Enter VIRGINIA, Nurse, *and* Clown

Virginia. You are grown wondrous amorous of late. Why do you look back so often?

Clown. Madam, I go as a Frenchman rides, all upon one buttock.

Virginia. And what's the reason?

Clown. Your ladyship never saw a monkey in all your lifetime have a clog at's tail, but he's still looking back to see what the devil 'tis that follows him.

Nurse. Very good; we are your clogs then.

Virginia. Your crest is grown regardant.
Here's the beauty[n]
That makes your eyes forgetful of their way.

Clown. Beauty! O, the gods! madam, I cannot endure her complexion.

Nurse. Why, sir, what's my complexion?

Clown. Thy complexion is just between a Moor and a Frenchwoman.

Virginia. But she hath a matchless eye, sir.

Clown. True, her eyes are not right matches; besides, she is a widow.

Nurse. What then, I pray you?

Clown. Of all waters, I would not have my beef powdered with a widow's tears.[n]

Virginia. Why, I beseech you?

Clown. O, they are too fresh, madam; assure yourself they will not last for the death of fourteen husbands above a day and a quarter: besides, if a man come a wooing to a widow, and invite her to a banquet, contrary to the old rule, she will sooner fill her eye than her belly. Besides that, if he look into her estate, first — look you, here are four fingers — first the charge of her husband's funeral, next debts and legacies, and lastly the reversion;[n] now take away debts and legacies, and what remains for her second husband? 64

Nurse. I would some of the tribe heard you!

Clown. There's a certain fish that, as the learned divulge, is called a shark: now this fish can never feed while he swims upon's belly; marry, when he lies upon his back, O, he takes it at pleasure.

Virginia. Well, sir, about your business; make provision 70
Of those things I directed.

Clown. Sweet lady, these eyes shall be the clerks of the kitchen for your belly; but I can assure you, woodcocks will be hard to be spoke with,[n] for there's a great feast towards.

Virginia. You are very pleasant.

Clown. And fresh cod is taken down thick and threefold;[n] women without great bellies go together by the ears for't;[n] and such a number of sweet-toothed caters in the market, not a calf's head to be got for love or money; mutton's mutton[n] now. 81

Virginia. Why, was it not so ever?

Clown. No, madam, the sinners i' th' suburbs had almost ta'en the name quite away from't,[n] 'twas so cheap and common: but now 'tis at a sweet reckoning; the term time is the mutton-monger in the whole calendar.[n]

Nurse. Do your lawyers eat any salads with their mutton?

Clown. Yes, the younger revellers use capers to their

mutton so long, till with their shuffling and cutting some of them be out at heels again. A bountiful mind and a full purse ever attend your ladyship.

Virginia. O, I thank you.

Enter MARCUS *and Four* Lictors

Marcus. See, yon's the lady.

Clown. I will buy up for your ladyship all the young cuckoos[n] in the market.

Virginia. What to do?

Clown. O, 'tis the most delicatest dish, I'll assure you, and newest in fashion: not a great feast in all Rome without a cuckoo.

Marcus. Virginia.

Virginia. Sir.

Marcus. Mistress, you do not know me,
Yet we must be acquainted: follow me.

Virginia. You do salute me strangely. Follow you!

Clown. Do you hear, sir? methinks you have followers enough. Many gentlemen that I know would not have so many tall followers[n] as you have for the price of ten hunting geldings, I'll assure you.

Marcus. Come, will you go?

Virginia. Whither? By what command?

Marcus. By warrant of these men, and privilege
I hold even on thy life. Come, ye proud dame,
You are not what you seem.

Virginia. Uncivil sir,
What makes you thus familiar and thus bold?
Unhand me, villain!

Marcus. What, mistress, to your lord?
He that can set the razor to your throat,
And punish you as freely as the gods,
No man to ask the cause? Thou art my slave,
And here I seize what's mine.

Virginia. Ignoble villain!
I am as free as the best king or consul

Since Romulus. What dost thou mean? Unhand me!—
Give notice to my uncle and Icilius,
What violence is offered me. [*To* CORBULO.

Marcus. Do, do.

Clown. Do you press women for soldiers, or do you beg women, instead of other commodities, to keep your hands in ure? By this light, if thou hast any ears on thy head, as it is a question, I'll make my lord pull you out by th' ears, though you take a castle. [*Exit.*

Marcus. Come, will you go along?

Nurse. Whither should she go, sir? Here's pulling and haling a poor gentlewoman!

Marcus. Hold you your prating; reverence the whip,
Shall seize on you for your smooth cozenage.[n]

Virginia. Are not you servant to lord Appius?

Marcus. Howe'er,[n] I am your lord, and will approve it
'Fore all the Senate.

Virginia. Thou wilt prove thyself
The cursèd pander for another's lust;
And this your plot shall burst about your ears
Like thunderbolts.

Marcus. Hold you that confidence:
First I will seize you by the course of law,
And then I'll talk with you.

Enter ICILIUS *and* NUMITORIUS

Num. How now, fair cousin?

Icil. How now, gentlemen?
What's the offence of fair Virginia,
You bend your weapons on us?

Lict. Sir, stand back,
We fear a rescue.

Icil. There's no need of fear,
Where there's no cause of rescue. What's the matter?

Virginia. O my Icilius, your incredulity

Hath quite undone me! I am now no more
Virginius's daughter, so this villain urges,
But published for his bondwoman.
Num. How's this?
Marcus. 'Tis true, my lord,
And I will take my right by course of law.
Icil. Villains, set her free,
Or by the power of all our Roman gods,
I'll give that just revenge unto my rage
Which should be given to justice! Bondwoman!
Marcus. Sir, we do not come to fight, we'll deal

Enter APPIUS

By course of law. My lord, we fear a rescue.
Appius. A rescue! never fear't; here's none in presence
But civil men. My lord, I am glad to see you.
Noble Icilius, we shall ever love you.
Now, gentlemen, reach your petitions.
Icil. My lord, my lord —
Appius. Worthy Icilius, if you have any business
Defer't until to-morrow, or the afternoon:
I shall be proud to pleasure you.
Icil. [*Aside.*] The fox
Is earthed, my lord, you cannot wind him yet.
Appius. Stools for my noble friends. — I pray you sit.
Marcus. May it please your lordship —
Appius. Why, uncivil sir,
Have I not begged forbearance of my best
And dearest friends, and must you trouble me?
Marcus. My lord, I must be heard, and will be heard:
Were all the gods in parliament, I'd burst
Their silence with my importunity,
But they should hear me.
Appius. The fellow's mad!
We have no leisure now to hear you, sir.

Marcus. Hast now no leisure to hear just complaints?
Resign thy place, O Appius, that some other
May do me justice, then!
Appius. We'll hear't to-morrow.
Marcus. O my lord,
Deny me justice absolutely, rather
Than feed me with delays.
Icil. Good my lord, hear him:
And wonder when you hear him, that a case
So full of vile imposture should desire
To be unfolded.
Marcus. Aye, my lord, 'tis true;
[But] the imposture is on their parts.[n]
Appius. Hold your prating:
Away with him to prison, clamorous fellow!
Suspect you our uprightness?
Marcus. No, my lord:
But I have mighty enemies, my lord,
Will overflow my cause. See, here I hold
My bondwoman, that brags herself to be
Descended of a noble family.
My purse is too scant to wage law with them:
I am enforced be mine own advocate,
Not one will plead for me. Now if your lordship
Will do me justice, so; if not, then know
High hills are safe, when seas poor dales o'erflow.
Appius. Sirrah, I think it fit to let you know,
Ere you proceed in this your subtle suit,
What penalty and danger you accrue,
If you be found to double. Here's a virgin
Famous by birth, by education noble;
And she, forsooth, haply but to draw
Some piece of money from her worthy father,
Must needs be challenged for a bondwoman.
Sirrah, take heed, and well bethink yourself;
I'll make you a precedent to all the world,
If I but find you tripping.

Marcus. Do it freely:
And view on that condition these just proofs.[n]
Appius. Is that the virgin's nurse?
Nurse. Her milch nurse, my lord: I had a sore hand with her for a year and a quarter: I have had somewhat to do with her since, too, for the poor gentlewoman hath been so troubled with the green sickness.
Icil. I pray thee, Nurse, entreat Sertorius
To come and speak with me. [*Exit* Nurse.
Appius. Here is strange circumstance; view it, my lord:
If he should prove this, it would make Virginius
Think he were wronged.
Icil. There is a devilish cunning
Expressed in this black forgery.
Appius. Icilius and Virginia, pray come near;
Compound with this base fellow. You were better
Disburse some trifle, than to undergo
The question of her freedom.
Icil. O my lord,
She were not worth a handful of a bribe,
If she did need a bribe!
Appius. Nay, take your course;
I only give you my opinion,
I ask no fee for't. Do you know this fellow?
Virginia. Yes, my lord; he's your servant.
Appius. You're i' th' right:
But will you truly know his character?
He was at first a petty notary;
A fellow that, being trusted with large sums
Of honest citizens, to be employed
I' th' trade of usury, this gentleman,
Couching his credit like a tilting-staff,
Most cunningly it brake, and at one course
He ran away with thirty thousand pound.
Returning to the city seven year after,
Having compounded with his creditors

For the third moiety, he buys an office
Belonging to our place, depends on us;
In which the oppression and vile injuries
He hath done poor suitors, they have cause to rue,
And I to pity: he hath sold his smiles
For silver, but his promises for gold;
His delays have undone men.
The plague that in some folded cloud remains,
The bright sun soon disperseth; but observe,
When black infection in some dunghill lies,
There's work for bells and graves, if it do rise.

Num. He was an ill prop to your house, my lord.

Appius. 'Tis true, my lord; but we that have such servants,
Are like to cuckolds that have riotous wives;
We are the last that know it: this is it
Makes noblemen suspected to have done ill,
When the oppression lies in their proud followers.

Marcus. My lord, it was some soothing sycophant,
Some base detracting rascal, that hath spread
This falsehood in your ears.

Appius. Peace, impudence!
Did I not yesterday, no longer since,
Surprise thee in thy study counterfeiting
Our hand?

Marcus. 'Tis true, my lord.

Appius. Being subscribed
Unto a letter filled with amorous stuff
Unto this lady?

Marcus. I have asked your pardon,
And gave you reason why I was so bold
To use that forgery.

Appius. Did you receive it?

Virginia. I did, my lord, and I can show your lordship
A packet of such letters.

Appius. Now, by the gods,

I'll make you rue it! I beseech you, sir,
Show them the reason moved you counterfeit
Our letter.

Enter SERTORIUS

Marcus. Sir, I had no other colour
To come to speak with her.
Appius. A goodly reason!
Did you until this hour acquaint the lady
With your intended suit?
Marcus. At several times,
And would have drawn her by some private course
To have compounded for her liberty.
Virginia. Now, by a virgin's honour and true birth,
'Tis false, my lord! I never had a dream
So terrible as is this monstrous devil.
Appius. Well, sir, referring my particular wrong
To a particular censure,[n] I would know
What is your suit?
Marcus. My lord, a speedy trial.
Appius. You shall obtain't with all severity:
I will not give you longer time to dream
Upon new sleights to cloak your forgery.
Observe you this chameleon, my lords,
I'll make him change his colour presently.
Num. My lord, although th' uprightness of our cause
Needs no delays, yet for the satisfaction
Of old Virginius, let him be present
When we shall crave a trial.
Appius. Sir, it needs not:
Who stands for father of the innocent,
If not the judge? I'll save the poor old man
That needless travel.
Virginia. With your favour, sir,
We must entreat some respite in a business
So needful of his presence.
Appius. I do protest

You wrong yourselves thus to importune it.
Well, let it be to-morrow; I'll not sleep
Till I have made this thicket a smooth plain,
And given you your true honour back again.
Icil. My lord, the distance 'twixt the camp and us
Cannot be measured in so short a time:
Let us have four days' respite.
Appius. You are unwise;
Rumour by that time will have fully spread
The scandal, which being ended in one hour
Will turn to air: to-morrow is the trial;
In the meantime let all contented thoughts
Attend you.
Marcus. My lord, you deal unjustly
Thus to dismiss her; this is that they seek for:
Before to-morrow they'll convey her hence,
Where my claim shall not seize her.
Appius. Cunning knave!
You would have bond for her appearance? say?
Marcus. I think the motion's honest.
Appius. Very good.
Icilius shall engage his honoured word
For her appearance.
Marcus. As you please, my lord;
But it were fitting her old uncle there
Were jointly bound with him.
Appius. Well, sir, your pleasure
Shall have satiety. You'll take our word
For her appearance; will you not, sir, I pray?
Marcus. Most willingly, my lord.
Appius. Then, sir, you have it:
And i' th' meantime, I'll take the honoured lady
Into my guardianship; and, by my life,
I'll use her in all kindness as my wife.
Icil. Now, by the gods, you shall not!
Appius. Shall not, what?
Icil. *Not* use her as your wife, sir.

Appius. O, my lord,
I spake it from my heart.
Icil. Aye, very likely.
She is a virgin, sir, and must not lie
Under a man's forthcoming;[n] do you mark?—
[*Aside.*] Not under your forthcoming, lecherous Appius.
Appius. Mistake me not, my lord. Our secretary,
Take bonds for the appearance of this lady.
And now to you, sir; you that were my servant,
I here cashier you; never shalt thou shroud
Thy villainies under our noble roof,
Nor scape the whip, or the fell hangman's hook,
By warrant of our favour.
Marcus. So, my lord,
I am more free to serve the gods, I hope,
Now I have lost your service.
Appius. Hark you, sirrah,
Who shall give bonds for your appearance, ha!
To justify your claim?
Marcus. I have none, my lord.
Appius. Away! commit him prisoner to his chamber:
I'll keep you safe from starting.[n]
Marcus. Why, my lord—
Appius. Away, I will not hear you;
A judge's heart here in the midst must stand,
And move not a hair's breadth to either hand.
[*Exit with* MARCUS.
Num. O, were thy heart but of the selfsame piece
Thy tongue is, Appius, how blessed were Rome!
Icil. Post to the camp, Sertorius; thou hast heard
Th' effect of all, relate it to Virginius.
I pray thee use thy ablest horsemanship,
For it concerns us near.
Sert. I go, my lord. [Exit.
Icil. Sure all this is damnèd cunning.

Virginia. O my lord,
Seamen in tempests shun the flattering shore;
To bear full sails upon't were danger more:
So men o'erborne with greatness still hold dread[n]
False seeming friends that on their bosoms spread:
For this is a safe truth which never varies,
He that strikes all his sails seldom miscarries.
Icil. Must we be slaves both to a tyrant's will,
And confounding ignorance,[n] at once?
Where are we? in a mist, or is this hell?
I have seen as great as the proud judge have fell.
The bending willow yielding to each wind,
Shall keep his rooting firm, when the proud oak,
Braving the storm, presuming on his root,
Shall have his body rent from head to foot.
Let us expect the worst that may befall,
And with a noble confidence bear all. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III[n]

Enter APPIUS, MARCUS, *and a* Servant

Appius. Here, bear this packet to Minutius,
And privately deliver't: make as much speed
As if thy father were deceased i' th' camp,
And that thou went'st to take th' administration
Of what he left thee. Fly!
Serv. I go, my lord. [*Exit.*
Appius. O my trusty Claudius!
Marcus. My dear lord,
Let me adore your divine policy.
You have poisoned them with sweetmeats; you have, my lord.
But what contain those letters?
Appius. Much importance.
Minutius is commanded by that packet,

To hold Virginius prisoner in the camp
On some suspect of treason.
Marcus. But, my lord,
How will you answer this?
Appius. Tush, any fault
Or shadow of a crime will be sufficient
For his committing: thus, when he is absent,
We shall in a more calm and friendly sea
Sail to our purpose.
Marcus. Mercury himself
Could not direct more safely.
Appius. O my Claudius,
Observe this rule; one ill must cure another;
As aconitum, a strong poison, brings
A present cure against all serpents' stings.
In high attempts the soul hath infinite eyes,[n]
And 'tis necessity makes men most wise.
Should I miscarry in this desperate plot,
This of my fate in aftertimes be spoken,
I'll break that with my weight on which I'm broken.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV[n]

Enter Two Servingmen *at one door, at the other the* Clown, *melancholy*

First Serv. Why, how now, Corbulo? thou wast not wont to be of this sad temper. What's the matter now?
Clown. Times change, and seasons alter,
Some men are born to the bench, and some to the halter.
What do you think now that I am?
First Serv. I think thee to be Virginia's man, and Corbulo.
Clown. No, no such matter: guess again: tell me but what I am, or what manner of fellow you imagine me to be.

First Serv. I take thee to be an honest good fellow.

Clown. Wide of the bow-hand[n] still: Corbulo is no such man.

Second Serv. What art thou, then?

Clown. Listen, and I'll describe myself to you: I am something better than a knave, and yet come short of being an honest man; and though I can sing a treble, yet am accounted but as one of the base, being indeed, and as the case stands with me at this present, inferior to a rogue, and three degrees worse than a rascal.

First Serv. How comes this to pass?

Clown. Only by my service's success. Take heed whom you serve, O you serving creatures! for this is all I have got by serving my lady Virginia.

Second Serv. Why, what of her?

Clown. She is not the woman you take her to be; for though she have borrowed no money, yet she is entered into bonds; and though you may think her a woman not sufficient, yet 'tis very like her bond will be taken. The truth is, she is challenged to be a bondwoman; now if she be a bondwoman and a slave, and I her servant and vassal, what did you take me to be? I am an ant, a gnat, a worm; a woodcock amongst birds; a hodmondod amongst flies; amongst curs a trendle-tail[n] and amongst fishes a poor iper; but amongst servingmen worse, worse than the man's man to the under yeomen-fewterer.

First Serv. But is it possible thy lady is challenged to be a slave? What witness have they?

Clown. Witness these fountains, these flood-gates, these well-springs! The poor gentlewoman was arrested in the open market; I offered, I offered to bail her; but (though she was) I could not be taken. The grief hath gone so near my heart, that until I be made free, I shall never be mine own man. The lord Appius hath committed her to ward, and it is thought she shall neither lie on the knight side, nor in the twopenny ward;[n] for *if he may have* his will of her, he means to put her in the

hole.[n] His warrant hath been out for her; but how the case stands with him, or how matters will be taken up with her, 'tis yet uncertain.

Second Serv. When shall the trial be?

Clown. I take it to be as soon as the morning is brought a-bed of a new son and heir.

Second Serv. And when is that?

Clown. Why, to-morrow; for every morning, you know, brings forth a new sun; but they are all short-lived, for every night she drowns them in the western sea. But to leave these enigmas, as too high for your dull apprehensions: shall I see you at the trial to-morrow?

First Serv. By Jove's help, I'll be there.

Second Serv. And I, if I live.

Clown. And I, if I die for't: here's my hand, I'll meet you. It is thought that my old master will be there at the bar; for though all the timber of his house yet stand, yet my lord Numitorius hath sent one of his posts to the camp to bid him spur, cut, and come to the sentence. O, we have a house at home as heavy as if it were covered with lead! But you will remember to be there.

First Serv. And not to fail.

Clown. If I chance to meet you there, and that the case go against us, I will give you a quart, not of wine, but of tears; for instead of a new roll, I purpose to break my fast with sops of sorrow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH

SCENE I[n]

Enter VIRGINIUS, *like a slave;* NUMITORIUS, ICILIUS, VALERIUS, HORATIUS, VIRGINIA, *like a slave;* JULIA, CALPHURNIA, *and* Nurse

Virginius. Thanks to my noble friends: it now appears
That you have rather loved me than my fortune,
For that's near shipwrecked: chance, you see, still ranges,
And this short dance of life is full of changes.
Appius — how hollow that name sounds, how dreadful!
It is a question whether the proud lecher
Will view us to our merit; for they say,
His memory to virtue and good men
Is still carousing Lethe.[n] O the gods!
Not with more terror do the souls in hell
Appear before the seat of Rhadamant,[n]
Than the poor client yonder.
Num. O Virginius;
Why do you wear this habit? it ill fits
Your noble person, or this reverend place.
Virginius. That's true, old man; but it well fits the case
That's now in question. If with form and show
They prove her slaved, all freedom I'll forego.
Icil. Noble Virginius,
Put out a bold and confident defence;
Search the imposture, like a cunning trier;
False metals bear the touch, but brook not fire,
Their brittleness betrays them: let your breath
Discover as much shame in them, as death

Did ever draw from offenders; let your truth
Nobly supported, void of fear or art,
Welcome whatever comes with a great heart.
Virginius. Now, by the gods, I thank thee, noble youth!
I never feared in a besiegèd town
Mines or great engines like yon lawyer's gown.
Virginia. O my dear lord and father! once you gave me
A noble freedom, do not see it lost
Without a forfeit; take the life you gave me,
And sacrifice it rather to the gods
Than to a villain's lust. Happy the wretch
Who, born in bondage, lives and dies a slave,
And sees no lustful projects bent upon her,
And neither knows the life nor death of honour.
Icil. We have neither justice, no, nor violence,
Which should reform corruption sufficient
To cross their black premeditated doom.[n]
Appius will seize her; all the fire in hell
Is leaped into his bosom.
Virginius. O you gods,
Extinguish it with your compassionate tears,
Although you make a second deluge spread,
And swell more high than Teneriff's high head!
Have not the wars heaped snow sufficient
Upon this aged head, but they will still
Pile winter upon winter?

Enter APPIUS, OPPIUS, MARCUS, *Six* Senators, Advocate, *and* Lictors

Appius. Is he come! say?
Now, by my life, I'll quit the general.
Num. Your reverence to the judge, good brother.
Virginius. Yes, sir, I have learnt my compliment *thus:*

Blessed mean estates who stand in fear of many,
And great are cursed for that they fear not any.
Appius. What, is Virginius come?
Virginius. I am here, my lord.
Appius. Where is your daughter?
Num. Here, my reverend lord.
Your habit shows you strangely.[n]
Virginia. O, 'tis fit;
It suits both time and cause. Pray pardon it.
Appius. Where is your advocate?
Virginius. I have none, my lord;
Truth needs no advocate: the unjust cause
Buys up the tongues that travel with applause
In these your throngèd courts: I want not any,
And count him the most wretched that needs many.
Adv. May it please your reverend lordships —
Appius. What are you, sir?
Adv. Of counsel with my client, Marcus Claudius.
Virginius. My lord, I undertake a desperate combat
To cope with this most eloquent lawyer:
I have no skill i' th' weapon, good my lord:
I mean I am not travelled in your laws:
My suit is therefore, by your special goodness,
They be not wrested against me.[n]
Appius. O Virginius, the gods defend they should!
Virginius. Your humble servant shall ever pray for you.
Thus shall your glory be above your place,
Or those high titles which you hold in court;
For they die blessed that die in good report.
Now, sir, I stand you.[n]
Adv. Then have at you, sir.
May it please your lordships, here is such a case,
So full of subtlety, and, as it were,
So far benighted in an ignorant mist,
That though my reading be sufficient,
· My practice more, I never was entangled
· In the like purse-net. Here is one that claims

This woman for his daughter: here's another
Affirms she is his bondslave: now the question
(With favour of the bench) I shall make plain
In two words only without circumstance.
Appius. Fall to your proofs.
Adv. Where are our papers?
Marcus. Here, sir.
Adv. Where, sir? I vow y'are the most tedious client. —
Now we come to't, my lord. Thus stands the case,
The law is clear on our sides. [*To* MARCUS.] Hold your prating.
That honourable lord Virginius,
Having been married about fifteen year,
And issueless, this virgin's politic mother,
Seeing the land was likely to descend
To Numitorius — I pray, sir, listen;
You, my lord Numitorius, attend;
We are on your side — old Virginius,
Employed in foreign wars, she sends him word
She was with child — observe it, I beseech you,
And note the trick of a deceitful woman:
She in the meantime feigns the passions
Of a great-bellied woman; counterfeits
Their passions and their qualms; and verily
All Rome held this for no imposturous stuff:
What's to be done now? Here's a rumour spread
Of a young heir, gods bless it! and belly
Bumbasted with a cushion: but there wants,
(What wants there?) nothing but a pretty babe,
Bought with some piece of money — where — it skills not,
To furnish this supposèd lying-in.
Nurse. I protest, my lord, the fellow i' th' night-cap[n]
Hath not spoke one true word yet.
Appius. Hold you your prating, woman, till you are *called.*

Adv. 'Tis purchased. Where? From this man's bondwoman.
The money paid. [To MARCUS.] What was the sum of money?
Marcus. A thousand drachmas.
Adv. Good; a thousand drachmas.
Appius. Where is that bondwoman?
Marcus. She's dead, my lord.
Appius. O, dead; that makes your cause suspicious.
Adv. But here's her deposition on her death-bed,
With other testimony to confirm
What we have said is true. Will't please your lordship
Take pains to view these writings? Here, my lord;
We shall not need to hold your lordships long,
We'll make short work on't.
Virginius. My lord —
Appius. By your favour. —
If that your claim be just, how happens it
That you have discontinued it the space
Of fourteen years?
Adv. I shall resolve your lordship.
Icil. I vow this is a practised dialogue:
Comes it not rarely off?
Virginia. Peace; give them leave.
Adv. 'Tis very true: this gentleman[n] at first
Thought to conceal this accident, and did so;
Only revealed his knowledge to the mother
Of this fair bondwoman, who bought his silence,
During her lifetime, with great sums of coin.
Appius. Where are your proofs of that?
Adv. Here, my good lord, with depositions likewise.
Appius. Well, go on.
Adv. For your question
Of discontinuance: put case my slave
Run away from me, dwell in some near city
The space of twenty years, and there grow rich,

It is in my discretion, by your favour,
To seize him when I please.
Appius. That's very true.
Virginius. Cast not your noble beams,[n] you reverend judges,
On such a putrifièd dunghill.
Appius. By your favour: you shall be heard anon.
Virginius. My lords, believe not this spruce orator:
Had I but feed him first, he would have told
As smooth a tale on our side.
Appius. Give us leave.
Virginius. He deals in formal glosses, cunning shows,
And cares not greatly which way the case goes.
Examine, I beseech you, this old woman,
Who is the truest witness of her birth.
Appius. Soft you; is she your only witness?
Virginius. She is, my lord.
Appius. Why, is it possible
Such a great lady, in her time of childbirth,
Should have no other witness but a nurse?
Virginius. For aught I know the rest are dead, my lord.
Appius. Dead? no, my lord, belike they were of counsel
With your deceasèd lady, and so[n] shamed
Twice to give colour to so vile an act.
Thou, nurse, observe me; thy offence already
Doth merit punishment beyond our censure;
Pull not more whips upon thee.
Nurse. I defy your whips, my lord.
Appius. Command her silence, Lictors.
Virginius. O, injustice! you frown away my witness!
Is this law? is this uprightness?
Appius. Have you viewed the writings?
This is a trick to make our slaves our heirs
Beyond prevention.
Virginius. Appius, wilt thou hear me?

You have slandered a sweet lady that now sleeps
In a most noble monument. Observe me:
I would have ta'en her simple word to gage
Before his soul or thine.
Appius. That makes thee wretched.
Old man, I am sorry for thee that thy love
By custom is grown natural, which by nature
Should be an absolute loathing: note the sparrow,
That having hatched a cuckoo, when it sees
Her brood a monster to her proper kind,
Forsakes it, and with more fear shuns the nest,
Than she had care i' th' spring to have it dressed,
Cast thy affection, then, behind thy back,
And think —
Adv. Be wise; take counsel of your friends.
You have many soldiers in their time of service
Father strange children.
Virginius. True; and pleaders, too,
When they are sent to visit provinces.
You, my most neat and cunning orator,
Whose tongue is quicksilver, pray thee, good Janus,
Look not so many several ways at once,
But go to th' point.
Adv. I will, and keep you out
At point's end,[n] though I am no soldier.
Appius. First the oath of the deceased bondwoman.
Adv. A very virtuous matron.
Appius. Joined with the testimony of Claudius.
Adv. A most approvèd honest gentleman.
Appius. Besides six other honest gentlemen.
Adv. All knights, and there's no question but their oaths
Will go for current.
Appius. See, my reverend lords,
And wonder at a case so evident.
Virginius. My lord, I knew it.
Adv. Observe, my lord, how their own policy

Confounds them. Had your lordship yesterday
Proceeded, as 'twas fit, to a just sentence,
The apparel and the jewels that she wore,
More worth than all her tribe, had then been due
Unto our client: now, to cozen him
Of such a forfeit, see they bring the maid
In her most proper habit, bondslave like,
And they will save by th' hand[n] too. Please your lordships,
I crave a sentence.

Virginius. Appius!

Virginia. My lord!

Icil. Lord Appius!

Virginius. Now, by the gods, here's juggling!

Num. Who cannot counterfeit a dead man's hand?

Virginius. Or hire some villains to swear forgeries?

Icil. Claudius was brought up in your house, my lord,
And that's suspicious.

Num. How is't probable,
That our wife being present at the childbirth,
Whom this did nearest concern, should ne'er reveal it?

Virginius. Or if ours dealt thus cunningly, how haps it
Her policy, as you term it, did not rather
Provide an issue male to cheer the father?

Adv. I'll answer each particular.

Appius. It needs not;
Here's witness, most sufficient witness.
Think you, my lord, our laws are writ in snow,
And that your breath can melt them?

Virginius. No, my lord,
We have not such hot livers:[n] mark you that.

Virginia. Remember yet the gods, O Appius,
Who have no part in this! Thy violent lust
Shall, like the biting of the envenomed aspic,
Steal thee to hell. So subtle are thy evils,
In life they'll seem good angels, in death devils.

Appius. Observe you not this scandal?
Icil. Sir, 'tis none.
I'll show thy letters full of violent lust
Sent to this lady.
Appius. Wilt thou breathe a lie
'Fore such a reverend audience?
Icil. That place
Is sanctuary to thee. Lie! see here they are.
Appius. My lords, these are but dilatory shifts.
Sirrah, I know you to the very heart,
And I'll observe you.
Icil. Do, but do it with justice.
Clear thyself first, O Appius, ere thou judge
Our imperfections rashly; for we wot
The office of a justice is perverted quite,
When one thief hangs another.
First Sen. You are too bold.
Appius. Lictors, take charge of him.
[*They seize* ICILIUS.
Icil. 'Tis very good.
Will no man view these papers? What, not one?
Jove, thou hast found a rival upon earth,
His nod strikes all men dumb. My duty to you.
The ass that carried Isis on his back,
Thought that the superstitious people kneeled
To give his dullness humble reverence:
If thou thinkest so, proud judge, I let thee see
I bend low to thy gown, but not to thee.
Virginius. There's one in hold already. Noble youth,
Fetters grace one being worn for speaking truth:
I'll lie with thee, I swear, though in a dungeon.
[*To* APPIUS.] The injuries you do us we shall pardon,
But it is just the wrongs which we forgive,
The gods are charged therewith to see revenged.
Appius. Come, y' are a proud plebeian.[n]
Virginius. True, my lord:
Proud in the glory of my ancestors,

Who have continued these eight hundred years:
The heralds have not known you these eight months.
Appius. Your madness wrongs you; by my soul, I love you.
Virginius. Thy soul!
O, thy opinion, old Pythagoras![n]
Whither, O whither should thy black soul fly?
Into what ravenous bird, or beast most vile?
Only into a weeping crocodile.
Love me! Thou lov'st me, Appius, as the earth loves rain,
Thou fain wouldst swallow me.
Appius. Know you the place you speak in?
Virginius. I'll speak freely.
Good men too much trusting their innocence
Do not betake them to that just defence
Which gods and nature gave them; but even wink
In the black tempest, and so fondly sink.
Appius. Let us proceed to sentence.
Virginius. Ere you speak,
One parting farewell let me borrow of you
To take of my Virginia.
Appius. Now, my lords,
We shall have fair confession of the truth.
Pray take your course.
Virginius. Farewell, my sweet Virginia; never, never,
Shall I taste fruit of the most blessèd hope
I had in thee. Let me forget the thought
Of thy most pretty infancy: when first
Returning from the wars, I took delight
To rock thee in my target; when my girl
Would kiss her father in his burganet
Of glittering steel hung 'bout his armèd neck;
And, viewing the bright metal, smile to see
Another fair Virginia smile on thee:
When I first taught thee how to go, to speak:
And when my wounds have smarted, I have sung

With an unskilful, yet a willing voice,
To bring my girl asleep. O my Virginia,
When we begun to be, begun our woes,
Increasing still, as dying life still grows!
Appius. This tediousness does much offend the court.
Silence! attend her sentence.
Virginius. Hold! without sentence I'll resign her freely,
Since you will prove her to be none of mine.
Appius. See, see, how evidently truth appears,
Receive her, Claudius.
Virginius. Thus I surrender her into the court
[*Kills her.*
Of all the gods. And see, proud Appius, see,
Although not justly, I have made her free.
And if thy lust with this act be not fed,
Bury her in thy bowels now she's dead.
Omnes. O, horrid act!
Appius. Lay hand upon the murderer!
Virginius. O for a ring of pikes to circle me!
What! have I stood the brunt of thousand enemies
Here to be slain by hangmen? No; I'll fly
To safety in the camp. [*Exit.*
Appius. Some pursue the villain,
Others take up the body. Madness and rage
Are still th' attendants of old doting age. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter two Soldiers

First Soldier. Is our hut swept clean?
Second Soldier. As I can make it.
First Soldier. 'Tis betwixt us two;
But how many, think'st thou, bred of Roman blood,
Did lodge with us last night?

Second Soldier. More, I think, than the camp hath enemies;
They are not to be numbered.
First Soldier. Comrague, I fear
Appius will doom us to Actæon's death,
To be worried by the cattle that we feed.
How goes the day?
Second Soldier. My stomach has struck twelve.
First Soldier. Come, see what provant our knapsack yields.
This is our store, our garner.
Second Soldier. A small pittance.
First Soldier. Feeds Appius thus? Is this a city feast?
This crust doth taste like date stones, and this thing,
If I knew what to call it —
Second Soldier. I can tell you: cheese struck in years.
First Soldier. I do not think but this same crust was baked,
And this cheese frighted out of milk and whey,
Before we two were soldiers: though it be old,
I see't can crawl: what living things be these
That walk so freely 'tween the rind and pith?
For here's no sap left.
Second Soldier. They call them gentles.
First Soldier. Therefore 'tis thought fit,
That soldiers, by profession gentlemen,
Should thus be fed with gentles. I am stomach sick;
I must have some strong water.
Second Soldier. Where will you hav't?
First Soldier. In yon green ditch, a place which none can pass
But he must stop his nose; thou know'st it well:
There where the two dead dogs lie.
Second Soldier. Yes, I know't.
First Soldier. And see the cat that lies a distance off
Be flayed for supper: though we dine to-day

As Dutchmen feed their soldiers,[n] we will sup
Bravely, like Roman leaguerers.
Second Soldier. Sir, the general.
First Soldier. We'll give him place:
But tell none of our dainties, lest we have
Too many guests to supper. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MINUTIUS *with his* Soldiers, *reading a letter*

Min. Most sure 'tis so, it cannot otherwise be.
Either Virginius is degenerate
From the ancient virtues he was wont to boast,
Or in some strange displeasure with the Senate;
Why should these letters else from Appius
Confine him a close prisoner to the camp?
And, which confirms his guilt, why should he fly?
Needs then must I incur some high displeasure
For negligence, to let him thus escape;
Which to excuse, and that it may appear
I have no hand with him, but am of faction
Opposed in all things to the least misdeed,
I will cashier him, and his tribuneship
Bestow upon some noble gentleman
Belonging to the camp. Soldiers and friends,
You that beneath Virginius' colours marched,
By strict command from the Decemvirate,
We take you from the charge of him late fled,
And his authority, command, and honour,
We give this worthy Roman. Know his colours,
And prove his faithful soldiers.
Roman. Warlike general,
My courage and my forwardness in battle
Shall plead how well I can deserve the title,
To be a Roman tribune.

Enter a Soldier *in haste*

Min. Now, the news?

Soldier. Virginius, in a strange shape of distraction,
Enters the camp, and at his heels a legion
Of all estates, growths, ages, and degrees,
With breathless paces dog his frighted steps.
It seems half Rome's unpeopled with a train,
That either for some mischief done, pursue him,
Or to attend some uncouth novelty.

Min. Some wonder our fear promises. Worthy soldiers,
Marshal yourselves, and entertain this novel
Within a ring of steel. Wall in this portent
With men and harness, be it ne'er so dreadful.
He's entered, by the clamour of the camp,
That entertains him with these echoing shouts.
Affection that in soldiers' hearts is bred,
Survives the wounded, and outlives the dead.

Enter VIRGINIUS, *with his knife, that and his arms, stripped up to the elbows, all bloody; coming into the midst of the* Soldiers, *he makes a stand*

Virginius. Have I in all this populous assembly
Of soldiers, that have proved Virginius' valour,
One friend? Let him come thrill his partisan
Against this breast, that through a large wide wound
My mighty soul might rush out of this prison,
To fly more freely to yon crystal palace,
Where honour sits enthronised. What! no friend?
Can this great multitude, then, yield an enemy
That hates my life? Here let him seize it freely.
What! no man strike? Am I so well beloved?
Minutius, then to thee: if in this camp
There lives one man so just to punish sin,
So charitable to redeem from torments
A wretched soldier, at his worthy hand
I beg a death.

Min. What means Virginius?

Virginius. Or if the general's heart be so obdure

To an old begging soldier, have I here
No honest legionary of mine own troop,
At whose bold hand and sword, if not entreat,
I may command a death?
First Soldier. Alas! good captain.
Min. Virginius, you have no comand at all!
Your companies are elsewhere now bestowed.
Besides, we have a charge to stay you here,
And make you the camp's prisoner.
Virginius. General, thanks:
For thou hast done as much with one harsh word
As I begged from their weapons; thou hast killed me,
But with a living death.
Min. Besides, I charge you
To speak what means this ugly face of blood,[n]
You put on your distractions? What's the reason
All Rome pursues you, covering those high hills,
As if they dogged you for some damnèd act?
What have you done?
Virginius. I have played the parricide;
Killed mine own child.
Min. Virginia!
Virginius. Yes, even she.
These rude hands ripped her, and her innocent blood
Flowed above my elbows.
Min. Killed her willingly!
Virginius. Willingly, with advice, premeditation,
And settled purpose; and see still I wear
Her crimson colours, and these withered arms
Are dyed in her heart blood.
Min. Most wretched villain!
Virginius. But how? I loved her life. Lend me amongst you
One speaking organ to discourse her death,
It is too harsh an imposition
To lay upon a father. O my Virginia!
Min. How agrees this? Love her, and murder her!

Virginius. Yes: give me but a little leave to drain
A few red tears, for soldiers should weep blood,
And I'll agree them well. Attend me all.
Alas! might I have kept her chaste and free,
This life, so oft engaged for ingrateful Rome,
Lay in her bosom: but when I saw her pulled
By Appius' lictors to be claimed a slave,
And dragged into a public sessons-house,
Divorced from her fore-spousals with Icilius,
A noble youth, and made a bondwoman,
Enforced by violence from her father's arms
To be a prostitute and paramour
To the rude twinings of a lecherous judge;
Then, then, O loving soldiers (I'll not deny it,
For 'twas mine honour, my paternal pity,
And the sole act, for which I love my life);
Then lustful Appius, he that sways the land,
Slew poor Virginia by this father's hand.

First Soldier. O villain Appius!

Second Soldier. O noble Virginius!

Virginius. To you I appeal, you are my sentencers:
Did Appius right, or poor Virginius wrong?
Sentence my fact with a free general tongue.[n]

First Soldier. Appius is the parricide.

Second Soldier. Virginius guiltless of his daughter's death.

Min. If this be true, Virginius (as the moan
Of all the Roman fry that follows you
Confirms at large), this cause is to be pitied,
And should not die revengeless.

Virginius. Noble Minutius,
Thou hast a daughter, thou hast a wife too;
So most of you have, soldiers; why might not this
Have happened you? Which of you all, dear friends,
But now, even now, may have your wives deflowered,
Your daughters slaved, and made a lictor's prey?
Think them not safe in Rome, for mine lived there.

Roman. It is a common cause.

First Soldier. Appius shall die for't.

Second Soldier. Let's make Virginius general!

Omnes. A general! a general! let's make Virginius general!

Min. It shall be so. Virginius, take my charge:
The wrongs are thine, so violent and so weighty,
That none but he that lost so fair a child,
Knows how to punish. By the gods of Rome,
Virginius shall succeed my full command.

Virginius. What's honour unto me? a weak old man,
Weary of life, and covetous of a grave:
I am a dead man now Virginia lives not.
The selfsame hand that dared to save from shame
A child, dares in the father act the same.

[*Offers to kill himself.*

First Soldier. Stay, noble general!

Min. You much forget revenge, Virginius.
Who, if you die, will take your cause in hand,
And proscribe Appius, should you perish thus?

Virginius. Thou ought'st, Minutius: soldiers, so ought you.
I'm out of fear; my noble wife's expired;
My daughter, of blessed memory, the object
Of Appius' lust, lives 'mongst th' Elysian Vestals;
My house yields none fit for his lictors' spoil.
You that have wives lodged in yon prison, Rome,
Have lands unrifled, houses yet unseized,
Your freeborn daughters yet unstrumpeted,
Prevent these mischiefs yet while you have time.

First Soldier. We will by you, our noble general.

Second Soldier. He that was destined to preserve great Rome.

Virginius. I accept your choice, in hope to guard you all
From my inhuman sufferings. Be't my pride
That I have bred a daughter, whose chaste blood
Was spilt for you, and for Rome's lasting good. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH

SCENE I[n]

Enter OPPIUS, *a* Senator, *and the* Advocate

Opp. Is Appius, then, committed?
Sen. So 'tis rumoured.
Opp. How will you bear you in this turbulent state?
You are a member of that wretched faction:
I wonder how you scape imprisonment.
Adv. Let me alone; I have learnt with the wise hedge-hog,
To stop my cave that way the tempest drives.
Never did bear-whelp tumbling down a hill,
With more art shrink his head betwixt his claws,
Than I will work my safety. Appius
Is in the sand already up to th' chin,
And shall I hazard landing on that shelf?
He's a wise friend that first befriends himself.
Opp. What is your course of safety?
Adv. Marry, this:
Virginius, with his troops, is entering Rome,
And it is like that in the market-place
My lord Icilius and himself shall meet:
Now to encounter these, two such great armies,
Where lies my court of guard?[n]
Sen. Why, in your heels:
There are strange dogs uncoupled.
Adv. You are deceived:
I have studied a most eloquent oration,
That shall applaud their fortune, and distaste
The cruelty of Appius.
Sen. Very good, sir:
It seems, then, you will rail upon your lord,
Your late good benefactor?

Adv. By the way, sir.
Sen. Protest Virginia was no bondwoman,
And read her noble pedigree?
Adv. By the way, sir.
Opp. Could you not, by the way, too, find occasion
To beg lord Appius' lands?
Adv. And by the way
Perchance I will; for I will gull them all
Most palpably.
Opp. Indeed you have the art
Of flattery.
Adv. Of rhetoric, you would say:
And I'll begin my smooth oration thus:
Most learnèd captains —
Sen. Fie, fie, that's horrible! most of your captains
Are utterly unlearnèd.
Adv. Yet, I assure you,
Most of them know arithmetic so well,
That in a muster, to preserve dead pays,[n]
They'll make twelve stand for twenty.
Opp. Very good.
Adv. Then I proceed;
I do applaud your fortunes, and commend
In this your observation, noble shake-rags:
The helmet shall no more harbour the spider,
But it shall serve to carouse sack and cider.
The rest within I'll study. [*Exit.*
Opp. Farewell, Proteus,
And I shall wish thy eloquent bravado
May shield thee from the whip and bastinado.
Now in this furious tempest let us glide,
With folded sails, at pleasure of the tide. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[n]

Enter ICILIUS, HORATIUS, VALERIUS, NUMITORIUS, *at one door, with* Soldiers; VIRGINIUS, MINUTIUS, *and others, at the other door*

Icil. Stand!
Virginius. Make a stand![n]
Icil. A parley with Virginius.
Min. We will not trust our general 'twixt the armies,
But upon terms of hostage.
Num. Well advised:
Nor we our general. Who for the leaguer?
Min. Ourself.
Virginius. Who for the city?
Icil. Numitorius.
[MINUTIUS *and* NUMITORIUS *meet, embrace, and salute the generals.*
Num. How is it with your sorrow, noble brother?
Virginius. I am forsaken of the gods, old man.
Num. Preach not that wretched doctrine to yourself,
It will beget despair.
Virginius. What do you call
A burning fever? Is not that a devil?
It shakes me like an earthquake. Wilt a', wilt a'![n]
Give me some wine?
Num. O, it is hurtful for you.
Virginius. Why so are all things that the appetite
Of man doth covet in his perfect'st health.
Whatever art or nature have invented,
To make the boundless wish of man contented,
Are all his poison. Give me the wine there: when?[n]
Do you grudge me a poor cup of drink? Say, say.
Now by the gods, I'll leave enough behind me
To pay my debts; and for the rest, no matter
Who scrambles for't.
Num. Here, my noble brother.
Alas! your hand shakes: I will guide it to you.

Virginius. 'Tis true, it trembles. Welcome, thou just palsy!
'Twere pity this should do me longer service,
Now it hath slain my daughter. So, I thank you:[n]
Now I have lost all comforts in the world,
It seems I must a little longer live,
Be't but to serve my belly.
Min. O my lord,
This violent fever took him late last night:
Since when, the cruelty of the disease
Hath drawn him into sundry passions,
Beyond his wonted temper.
Icil. 'Tis the gods
Have poured their justice on him.
Virginius. You are sadly met, my lord.
Icil. Would we had met
In a cold grave together two months since!
I should not then have cursed you.
Virginius. Ha! What's that?
Icil. Old man, thou hast showed thyself a noble Roman,
But an unnatural father: thou hast turned
My bridal to a funeral. What devil
Did arm thy fury with the lion's paw,
The dragon's tail, with the bull's double horn,
The cormorant's beak, the cockatrice's eyes,
The scorpion's teeth, and all these by a father
To be employed upon his innocent child?
Virginius. Young man, I love thy true description:
I am happy now, that one beside myself
Doth teach me for this act. Yet, were I pleased,
I could approve the deed most just and noble;
And, sure, posterity, which truly renders
To each man his desert, shall praise me for't.
Icil. Come, 'twas unnatural and damnable.
Virginius. You need not interrupt me: here's a fury[n]
Will do it for you! You are a Roman knight:

What was your oath when you received your knighthood?
A parcel of it is, as I remember,
Rather to die with honour, than to live
In servitude. Had my poor girl been ravished,
In her dishonour, and in my sad grief,
Your love and pity quickly had ta'en end.
Great men's misfortunes thus have ever stood,
They touch none nearly, but their nearest blood.
What do you mean to do? It seems, my lord,
Now you have caught the sword within your hand,
Like a madman you'll draw it to offend
Those that best love you; and perhaps the counsel
Of some loose unthrifts, and vile malcontents
Hearten you to it: go to! take your course.
My faction shall not give the least advantage
To murderers, to banquerouts, or thieves,
To fleece the commonwealth.
Icil. Do you term us so?
Shall I reprove your rage, or is't your malice?
He that would tame a lion, doth not use
The goad or wirèd whip, but a sweet voice,
A fearful stroking, and with food in hand
Must ply his wanton hunger.
Virginius. Want of sleep
Will do it better than all these, my lord.
I would not have you wake for others' ruin,
Lest you turn mad with watching.
Icil. O you gods!
You are now a general; learn to know your place,
And use your noble calling modestly.
Better had Appius been an upright judge,
And yet an evil man, than honest man,
And yet a dissolute judge; for all disgrace
Lights less upon the person than the place.
You are i' th' city now, where if you raise
But the least uproar, even your father's house

Shall not be free from ransack. Piteous fires
That chance in towers of stone are not so feared
As those that light in flax-shops; for there's food
For eminent ruin.
Min. O my noble lord!
Let not your passion bring a fatal end
To such a good beginning. All the world
Shall honour that deed in him which first
Grew to a reconcilement.[n]
Icil. Come, my lord,
I love your friendship; yes, in sooth, I do;
But will not seal it with that bloody hand.
Join we our armies. No fantastic copy,
Or borrowed precedent will I assume
In my revenge. There's hope yet you may live
To outwear this sorrow.
Virginius. O, impossible!
A minute's joy to me would quite cross nature,
As those that long have dwelt in noisome rooms,
Swoon presently if they but scent perfumes.
Icil. To th' Senate! Come, no more of this sad tale;
For such a tell-tale may we term our grief,
And doth as 'twere so listen to her own words —
Envious of others' sleep, because she wakes —
I ever would converse with a grieved person
In a long journey to beguile the day,
Or winter evening to pass time away.
March on, and let proud Appius in our view,
Like a tree rotted, fall that way he grew. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter APPIUS *and* MARCUS *in prison, fettered and gyved*

Appius. The world is changed now. All damnations
Seize on the hydra-headed multitude,

That only gape for innovation.
O, who would trust a people!
Marcus. Nay, who would not,
Rather than one reared on a popular suffrage,
Whose station's built on avees[n] and applause?
There's no firm structure on these airy bases.
O, fie upon such greatness!
Appius. The same hands,
That yesterday to hear me concionate,
And oratorize, rung shrill plaudits forth
In sign of grace, now in contempt and scorn
Hurry me to this place of darkness.
Marcus. Could not their poisons rather spend themselves
On th' judge's folly, but must it need stretch
To me his servant, and sweep me along?
Curse on the inconstant rabble!
Appius. Grieves it thee
To impart my sad disaster?
Marcus. Marry doth it.
Appius. Thou shared'st a fortune with me in my greatness;
I haled thee after when I climbed my state;
And shrink'st thou at my ruin?
Marcus. I loved your greatness,
And would have traced you in the golden path
Of sweet promotion; but this your decline
Sours all these hopèd sweets.
Appius. 'Tis the world right:[n]
Such gratitude a great man still shall have
That trusts unto a temporizing slave.
Marcus. Slave! good. Which of us two
In our dejection is basest? I am most sure
Your loathsome dungeon is as dark as mine;
Your conscience for a thousand sentences
Wrongly denounced, much more oppressed than mine;
Then which is the most slave?

Appius. O, double baseness,
To hear a drudge thus with his lord compare!
Great men disgraced, slaves to their servants are.

Enter VIRGINIUS, ICILIUS, MINUTIUS, NUMITORIUS, HORATIUS, VALERIUS, OPPIUS, *with* Soldiers

Virginius. Soldiers, keep a strong guard whilst we survey
Our sentenced prisoners: and from this deep dungeon
Keep off that great concourse, whose violent hands
Would ruin this stone building, and drag hence
This impious judge, piecemeal to tear his limbs,
Before the law convince him.
Icil. See these monsters,
Whose fronts the fair Virginia's innocent blood
Hath vizarded with such black ugliness,
That they are loathsome to all good men's souls.
Speak, damnèd judge! how canst thou purge thyself
From lust and blood?
Appius. I do confess myself
Guilty of both: yet hear me, noble Romans.
Virginius, thou dost but supply my place,
I thine: fortune hath lift to me my chair,
And thrown me headlong to thy pleading-bar.
If in mine eminence I was stern to thee,
Shunning my rigour, likewise shun my fall;
And being mild where I showed cruelty,
Establish still thy greatness. Make some use
Of this my bondage. With indifference
Survey me, and compare my yesterday
With this sad hour, my height with my decline,
And give them equal balance.
Virginius. Uncertain fate! but yesterday his breath
Awed Rome, and his least torvèd frown was death:
I cannot choose but pity and lament,
So high a rise should have such low descent.

Icil. [*Aside.*] He's ready to forget his injury:
O too relenting age! — Thinks not Virginius,
If he should pardon Appius this black deed,
And set him once more in the ivory chair,
He would be wary to avoid the like,
Become a new man, a more upright judge,
And deserve better of the common weal?
Virginius. 'Tis like he would.
Icil. Nay, if you thus begin,
I'll fetch that [that] shall anatomize his sin.[n] [*Exit.*
Num. Virginius, you are too remiss to punish
Deeds of this nature: you must fashion now
Your actions to your place, not to your passion:
Severity to such acts is as necessary
As pity to the tears of innocence.
Min. He speaks but law and justice.
Make good the streets with your best men at arms.
[*A shout.*
Valerius and Horatius, know the reason
Of this loud uproar, and confusèd noise.
[*Exeunt* VAL. *and* HOR.
Although my heart be melting at the fall
Of men in place and office, we'll be just
To punish murd'rous acts, and censure lust.

Enter VALERIUS *and* HORATIUS

Val. Icilius, worthy lord, bears through the street
The body of Virginia towards this prison;
Which when it was discovered to the people,
Moved such a mournful clamour, that their cries
Pierced Heaven, and forced tears from their sorrowing eyes.
Hor. Here comes Icilius.

Enter ICILIUS *with the body of* VIRGINIA

Icil. Where was the pity, when thou slewest this maid,
Thou would'st extend to Appius? Pity! See

Her wounds still bleeding at the horrid presence
Of yon stern murderer,[n] till she find revenge;
Nor will these drops stanch, or these springs be dry
Till theirs be set a-bleeding. Shall her soul
(Whose essence some suppose lives in the blood),
Still labour without rest? Will old Virginius
Murder her once again in this delay?
Virginius. Pause there, Icilius.
This sight hath stiffened all my operant powers,
Iced all my blood, benumbed my motion[n] quite.
I'll pour my soul into my daughter's belly,
And with a soldier's tears embalm her wounds.
My only dear Virginia!
Appius. Leave this passion;
Proceed to your just sentence.
Virginius. We will. Give me two swords. Appius, grasp this;
You, Claudius, that: you shall be your own hangmen;[n]
Do justice on yourselves. You made Virginius
Sluice his own blood, lodged in his daughter's breast,
Which your own hands shall act upon yourselves.
If you be Romans, and retain their spirits,
Redeem a base life with a noble death,
And through your lust-burnt veins confine your breath.
Appius. Virginius is a noble justicer:
Had I my crooked paths levelled by thine,
I had not swayed the balance. Think not, lords,
But he that had the spirit to oppose the gods,
Dares likewise suffer what their powers inflict.
I have not dreaded famine, fire, nor strage,
Their common vengeance;[n] poison in my cup,
Nor dagger in my bosom, the revenge
Of private men for private injuries;
Nay, more than these, not feared to commit evil,
And shall I tremble at the punishment?
Now with as much resolvèd constancy,
As I offended, will I pay the mulct,

And this black stain laid on my family
(Than which a nobler hath not place in Rome),
Wash with my blood away. Learn of me, Claudius;
I'll teach thee what thou never studied'st yet,
That's bravely how to die. Judges are termed
The gods on earth; and such as are corrupt
Read me in this my ruin. Those that succeed me
That so offend, thus punish. This the sum of all,
Appius that sinned, by Appius' hand shall fall.
[*Kills himself.*

Virginius. He died as boldly as he basely erred,
And so should every true-bred Roman do.[n]
And he whose life was odious, thus expiring,
In his death forceth pity. Claudius, thou
Wast follower of his fortunes in his being,
Therefore in his not being imitate
His fair example.

Marcus. Death is terrible
Unto a conscience that's oppressed with guilt.
They say there is Elysium and hell;
The first I have forfeited, the latter fear:
My skin is not sword-proof.

Icil. Why dost thou pause?

Marcus. For mercy: mercy, I entreat you all.
Is't not sufficient for Virginius' slain
That Appius suffered? one of noble blood,
And eminence in place, for a plebeian?
Besides, he was my lord, and might command me:
If I did aught, 'twas by compulsion, lords;
And therefore I crave mercy.

Icil. Shall I doom him?

Virginius. Do, good Icilius.

Icil. Then I sentence thus:
Thou hadst a mercy, most unmeriting slave,
Of which thy base birth was not capable,
Which we take off by taking thence thy sword.
And *note the* difference 'twixt a noble strain,

And one bred from the rabble: both alike
Dared to transgress, but see their odds in death:
Appius died like a Roman gentleman,
And a man both ways knowing; but this slave
Is only sensible of vicious living,
Not apprehensive of a noble death:
Therefore as a base malefactor, we,
And timorous slave, give him, as he deserves,
Unto the common hangman.
Marcus. What, no mercy!
Icil. Stop's mouth:
Away with him! The life of the Decemviri
Expires in them. Rome, thou at length art free,
Restored unto thine ancient liberty!
Min. Of consuls; which bold Junius Brutus first
Begun in Tarquin's fall. Virginius, you
And young Icilius shall his place succeed,
So by the people's suffrage 'tis decreed.
Virginius. We marshal then our soldiers in that name
Of consuls, honoured with these golden bays.
Two fair, but ladies most infortunate,
Have in their ruins raised declining Rome,
Lucretia and Virginia, both renowned
For chastity. Soldiers and noble Romans,
To grace her death, whose life hath freed great Rome,
March with her corse to her sad funeral tomb!
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY.

The Revenger's Tragedy was first printed in 1607 and again in the next year. Tourneur's name appears on neither of these titles and his authorship is accepted rather than certain. The source of the plot of this involved and intricate intrigue has not been found. It is the arch-study which our drama affords of the degeneracy of court life in the age of the Italian decadence. Our very revulsion at its horrors and its wickedness is a tribute to the realistic art of its powerful author.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The DUKE.
LUSSURIOSO, the Duke's Son.
SPURIO, a Bastard.
AMBITIOSO, the Duchess' Eldest Son.
SUPERVACUO, the Duchess' Second Son.
The Duchess' Youngest Son.
VENDICE, disguised as PIATO, HIPPOLITO, also called CARLO, } Brothers of CASTIZA.
ANTONIO, PIERO, } Nobles.
DONDOLO.
Judges, Nobles, Gentlemen, Officers, Keeper, Servants.

The DUCHESS.
CASTIZA.
GRATIANA, Mother of CASTIZA.

SCENE — A City of ITALY

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE I

Near the House of GRATIANA

Enter VENDICE.[n] The Duke, Duchess, LUSSURIOSO, SPURIO, *with a train, pass over the stage with torch-light*

Ven. Duke! royal lecher! go, grey-haired adultery
And thou his son, as impious steeped as he:
And thou his bastard, true begot in evil:
And thou his duchess, that will do with devil[n]
Four excellent characters! O, that marrowless age
Should stuff the hollow bones with damned desires!
And, 'stead of heat, kindle infernal fires
Within the spendthrift veins of a dry duke,
A parched and juiceless luxur. O God! one,
That has scarce blood enough to live upon;
And he to riot it, like a son and heir!
O, the thought of that
Turns my abusèd heart-strings into fret.[n]
Thou sallow picture of my poisoned love,
[*Views the skull in his hand.*
My study's ornament, thou shell of death,
Once the bright face of my betrothèd lady,
When life and beauty naturally filled out
These ragged imperfections;
When two heaven-pointed diamonds were set

In those unsightly rings — then 'twas a face
So far beyond the artificial shine
Of any woman's bought complexion,
That the uprightest man (if such there be,
That sin but seven times a day) [n] broke custom,
And made up eight with looking after her.
O, she was able to ha' made a usurer's son
Melt all his patrimony in a kiss;
And what his father fifty years told,
To have consumed, and yet his suit been cold.
But, O accursèd palace!
Thee, when thou wert apparelled in thy flesh,
The old duke poisoned,
Because thy purer part would not consent
Unto his palsied lust; for old men lustful
Do show like young men angry, eager, violent,
Outbidden [n] like their limited performances.
O, 'ware an old man hot and vicious!
"Age, as in gold, in lust is covetous."
Vengeance, thou murder's quit-rent, and whereby
Thou show'st thyself tenant to tragedy;
O keep thy day, hour, minute, I beseech,
For those thou hast determined. Hum! who e'er knew
Murder unpaid? faith, give revenge her due,
She has kept touch [n] hitherto: be merry, merry,
Advance thee, O thou terror to fat folks,
To have their costly three-piled flesh [n] worn off
As bare as this; for banquets, ease, and laughter
Can make great men, as greatness goes by clay;
But wise men little are more great than they.

Enter HIPPOLITO

Hip. Still sighing o'er death's vizard?
Ven. Brother, welcome!
What comfort bring'st thou? how go things at court?
Hip. *In silk* and silver, brother: never braver.

Ven. Pooh!
Thou play'st upon my meaning. Prithee, say,
Has that bald madam, Opportunity,[n]
Yet thought upon's? speak, are we happy yet?
Thy wrongs and mine are for one scabbard fit.
Hip. It may prove happiness.
Ven. What is't may prove?
Give me to taste.
Hip. Give me your hearing, then.
You know my place at court?
Ven. Aye, the duke's chamber!
But 'tis a marvel thou'rt not turned out yet!
Hip. Faith, I've been shoved at; but 'twas still my hap
To hold by the duchess' skirt: you guess at that:
Whom such a coat[n] keeps up, can ne'er fall flat.
But to the purpose —
Last evening, predecessor unto this,
The duke's son warily inquired for me,
Whose pleasure I attended: he began
By policy to open and unhusk me
About the time and common rumour:
But I had so much wit to keep my thoughts
Up in their built houses; yet afforded him
An idle satisfaction without danger.
But the whole aim and scope of his intent
Ended in this: conjuring me in private
To seek some strange-digested fellow[n] forth,
Of ill-contented nature; either disgraced
In former times, or by new grooms displaced,
Since his stepmother's nuptials; such a blood,
A man that were for evil only good —
To give you the true word, some base-coined pander.
Ven. I reach you; for I know his heat is such,
Were there as many concubines as ladies,
He would not be contained; he must fly out.
I wonder how ill-featured, vile-proportioned,
That one should be, if she were made for woman,

Whom, at the insurrection of his lust,
He would refuse for once. Heart! I think none.
Next to a skull, though more unsound than one,
Each face he meets he strongly dotes upon.
Hip. Brother, y' have truly spoke him.
He knows not you, but I will swear you know him.
Ven. And therefore I'll put on that knave for once,
And be a right man then, a man o' the time;
For to be honest is not to be i' the world.
Brother, I'll be that strange-composèd fellow.
Hip. And I'll prefer you, brother.
Ven. Go to, then:
The smallest advantage fattens wrongèd men:
It may point out Occasion; if I meet her,
I'll hold her by the foretop[n] fast enough;
Or, like the French mole, heave up hair and all.
I have a habit that will fit it quaintly.
Here comes our mother.
Hip. And sister.
Ven. We must coin:
Women are apt, you know, to take false money;[n]
But I dare stake my soul for these two creatures;
Only excuse excepted, that they'll swallow,
Because their sex is easy in belief.

Enter GRATIANA *and* CASTIZA

Gra. What news from court, son Carlo?
Hip. Faith, mother,
'Tis whispered there the duchess' youngest son
Has played a rape on lord Antonio's wife.
Gra. On that religious lady!
Cas. Royal blood monster! he deserves to die,
If Italy had no more hopes but he.
Ven. Sister, y' have sentenced most direct and true,
The law's a woman,[n] and would she were you.
Mother, I must take leave of you.

Gra. Leave for what?
Ven. I intend speedy travel.
Hip. That he does, madam.
Gra. Speedy indeed!
Ven. For since my worthy father's funeral,
My life's unnaturally to me, e'en compelled;
As if I lived now, when I should be dead.
Gra. Indeed, he was a worthy gentleman,
Had his estate been fellow to his mind.
Ven. The duke did much deject him.
Gra. Much?
Ven. Too much:
And though disgrace oft smothered in his spirit,
When it would mount, surely I think he died
Of discontent, the noble man's consumption.
Gra. Most sure he did.
Ven. Did he, 'lack? you know all:—
You were his midnight secretary.
Gra. No.
He was too wise to trust me with his thoughts.
Ven. I' faith, then, father, thou wast wise indeed;
"Wives are but made to go to bed and feed."
Come, mother, sister: you'll bring me onward, brother?
Hip. I will.
Ven. [*Aside.*] I'll quickly turn into another.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

A Hall of Justice

Enter the Duke, LUSSURIOSO, *the* Duchess, SPURIO, AMBITIOSO, *and* SUPERVACUO; *the* Duchess' Youngest Son *brought out by* Officers. *Two* Judges

Duke. Duchess, it is your youngest son, we're sorry
His violent act has e'en drawn blood of honour,

And stained our honours;
Thrown ink upon the forehead of our state;
Which envious spirits will dip their pens into
After our death; and blot us in our tombs:
For that which would seem treason in our lives
Is laughter, when we're dead. Who dares now whisper,
That dares not then speak out, and e'en proclaim
With loud words and broad pens our closest shame?
1st Judge. Your grace hath spoke like to your silver years,
Full of confirmed gravity; for what is it to have
A flattering false insculption on a tomb,
And in men's hearts reproach? the bowelled corpse
May be seared in, but (with free tongue I speak)
The faults of great men through their cere-cloths break.
Duke. They do; we're sorry for't: it is our fate
To live in fear, and die to live in hate.
I leave him to your sentence; doom him, lords —
The fact is great — whilst I sit by and sigh.
Duch. My gracious lord, I pray be merciful:
Although his trespass far exceed his years,
Think him to be your own, as I am yours;
Call him not son-in-law: the law, I fear,
Will fall too soon upon his name and him:
Temper his fault with pity.
Lus. Good my lord,
Then 'twill not taste so bitter and unpleasant
Upon the judges' palate; for offences,
Gilt o'er with mercy, show like fairest women,
Good only for their beauties, which washed off,
No sin is uglier.
Amb. I beseech your grace,
Be soft and mild; let not relentless law
Look with an iron forehead on our brother.
Spu. [*Aside.*] He yields small comfort yet; hope he shall die;

And if a bastard's wish might stand in force,
Would all the court were turned into a corse!
Duch. No pity yet? must I rise fruitless then?
A wonder in a woman! are my knees
Of such low metal, that without respect —
1st Judge. Let the offender stand forth:
'Tis the duke's pleasure that impartial doom
Shall take fast hold of his unclean attempt.
A rape! why 'tis the very core of lust —
Double adultery.
Y. Son. So, sir.[n]
2nd Judge. And which was worse,
Committed on the lord Antonio's wife,
That general-honest lady. Confess, my lord,
What moved you to't?
Y. Son. Why, flesh and blood, my lord;
What should move men unto a woman else?
Lus. O, do not jest thy doom! trust not an ax
Or sword too far: the law is a wise serpent,
And quickly can beguile thee of thy life.
Though marriage only has made thee my brother,
I love thee so far: play not with thy death.
Y. Son. I thank you, troth; good admonitions, faith,
If I'd the grace now to make use of them.
1st Judge. That lady's name[n] has spread such a fair wing
Over all Italy, that if our tongues
Were sparing toward the fact, judgement itself
Would be condemned, and suffer in men's thoughts.
Y. Son. Well then, 'tis done; and it would please me well,
Were it to do again: sure, she's a goddess,
For I'd no power to see her, and to live.
It falls out true in this, for I must die;
Her beauty was ordained to be my scaffold.
And yet, methinks, I might be easier 'sessed:[n]
My fault being sport, let me but die in jest.

1st Judge. This be the sentence —
Duch. O, keep't upon your tongue; let it not slip;
Death too soon steals out of a lawyer's lip.
Be not so cruel-wise!
1st Judge. Your grace must pardon us;
'Tis but the justice of the law.
Duch. The law
Is grown more subtle than a woman should be.
Spu. [*Aside.*] Now, now he dies! rid 'em away.
Duch. [*Aside.*] O, what it is to have an old cool duke,
To be as slack in tongue as in performance! [n]
1st Judge. Confirmed, this be the doom irrevocable.
Duch. O!
1st Judge. To-morrow early —
Duch. Pray be abed, my lord.
1st Judge. Your grace much wrongs yourself.
Amb. No, 'tis that tongue:
Your too much right does do us too much wrong.
1st Judge. Let that offender —
Duch. Live, and be in health.
1st Judge. Be on a scaffold —
Duke. Hold, hold, my lord!
Spu. [*Aside.*] Pox on't,
What makes my dad speak now?
Duke. We will defer the judgement till next sitting:
In the meantime, let him be kept close prisoner.
Guard, bear him hence.
Amb. [*Aside.*] Brother, this makes for thee;
Fear not, we'll have a trick to set thee free.
Y. Son. [*Aside.*] Brother, I will expect it from you both;
And in that hope I rest.
Sup. Farewell, be merry.
[*Exit with a* Guard.
Spu. Delayed! deferred! nay then, if judgement have cold blood,
Flattery and bribes will kill it.

Duke. About it, then, my lords, with your best powers:
More serious business calls upon our hours.
[*Exeunt, excepting the* Duchess.
Duch. Was't ever known step-duchess was so mild
And calm as I? some now would plot his death
With easy doctors,[n] those loose-living men,
And make his withered grace fall to his grave,
And keep church better.[n]
Some second wife[n] would do this, and dispatch
Her double-loathèd lord at meat or sleep.
Indeed, 'tis true, an old man's twice a child;
Mine cannot speak; one of his single words
Would quite have freed my youngest dearest son
From death or durance, and have made him walk
With a bold foot upon the thorny law,
Whose prickles should bow under him; but 'tis not,
And therefore wedlock-faith shall be forgot:
I'll kill him in his forehead;[n] hate, there feed;
That wound is deepest, though it never bleed.
And here comes he whom my heart points unto,
His bastard son, but my love's true-begot;
Many a wealthy letter have I sent him,
Swelled up with jewels, and the timorous man
Is yet but coldly kind.
That jewel's mine that quivers in his ear,[n]
Mocking his master's chillness and vain fear.
He has spied me now!

Enter SPURIO

Spu. Madam, your grace so private?
My duty on your hand.
Duch. Upon my hand, sir! troth, I think you'd fear
To kiss my hand too, if my lip stood there.
Spu. Witness I would not, madam. [Kisses her.
Duch. 'Tis a wonder,

For ceremony has made many fools!
It is as easy way unto a duchess,
As to a hatted dame,[n] if her love answer:
But that[n] by timorous honours, pale respects,
Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways
Hard of themselves. What, have you thought of me?
Spu. Madam, I ever think of you in duty,
Regard, and —
Duch. Pooh! upon my love, I mean.
Spu. I would 'twere love; but 'tis a fouler name
Than lust: you are my father's wife — your grace may guess now
What I could call it.
Duch. Why, th' art his son but falsely;
'Tis a hard question whether he begot thee.
Spu. I' faith, 'tis true: I'm an uncertain man
Of more uncertain woman. Maybe, his groom
O' the stable begot me; you know I know not!
He could ride a horse well, a shrewd suspicion, marry! —
He was wondrous tall: he had his length, i' faith.
For peeping over half-shut holiday windows,[n]
Men would desire him light. When he was afoot
He made a goodly show under a penthouse;
And when he rid, his hat would check the signs,
And clatter barbers' basins.[n]
Duch. Nay, set you a-horseback once,
You'll ne'er light off.[n]
Spu. Indeed, I am a beggar.
Duch. That's the more sign thou'rt great. —
But to our love:
Let it stand firm both in thy thought and mind,
That the duke was thy father, as no doubt[n] then
He bid fair for't — thy injury is the more;
For had he cut thee a right diamond,
Thou had'st been next set in the dukedom's ring,
When his worn self, like age's easy slave,
Had dropped out of the collet[n] into th' grave.

What wrong can equal this? canst thou be tame,
And think upon't?
Spu. No, mad, and think upon't.
Duch. Who would not be revenged of such a father,
E'en in the worst way? I would thank that sin,
That could most injure him, and be in league with it.
O, what a grief 'tis that a man should live
But once i' the world, and then to live a bastard —
The curse o' the womb, the thief of nature,
Begot against the seventh commandment,
Half-damned in the conception by the justice
Of that unbribèd everlasting law.
Spu. O, I'd a hot-backed devil to my father.
Duch. Would not this mad e'en patience, make blood rough?[n]
Who but an eunuch would not sin? his bed,
By one false minute disinherited.
Spu. Aye, there's the vengeance that my birth was wrapped in!
I'll be revenged for all: now, hate, begin;
I'll call foul incest but a venial sin.
Duch. Cold still! in vain then must a duchess woo?
Spu. Madam, I blush to say what I will do.
Duch. Thence flew sweet comfort. Earnest, and farewell.[n] [*Kisses him.*
Spu. O, one incestuous kiss picks open hell.
Duch. Faith, now, old duke, my vengeance shall reach high,
I'll arm thy brow with woman's heraldry.[n] [*Exit.*
Spu. Duke, thou didst do me wrong; and, by thy act
Adultery is my nature.
Faith, if the truth were known, I was begot
After some gluttonous dinner; some stirring dish
Was my first father, when deep healths went round,
And ladies' cheeks were painted red with wine,
Their tongues, as short and nimble as their heels,
Uttering words sweet and thick; and when they rose,

Were merrily disposed to fall again.
In such a whispering and withdrawing hour,
When base male-bawds kept sentinel at stair-head,
Was I stol'n softly. O damnation meet!
The sin of feasts, drunken adultery!
I feel it swell me; my revenge is just!
I was begot in impudent wine and lust.
Stepmother, I consent to thy desires;
I love thy mischief well; but I hate thee
And those three cubs thy sons, wishing confusion,
Death and disgrace may be their epitaphs.
As for my brother; the duke's only son,
Whose birth is more beholding to report [n]
Than mine, and yet perhaps as falsely sown
(Women must not be trusted with their own),
I'll loose my days upon him, hate-all-I;
Duke, on thy brow I'll draw my bastardy:
For indeed a bastard by nature should make cuckolds,
Because he is the son of a cuckold-maker. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

A Part of the City

Enter VENDICE *in disguise and* HIPPOLITO

Ven. What, brother, am I far enough from myself?
Hip. As if another man had been sent whole
Into the world, and none wist how he came.
Ven. It will confirm me bold — the child o' the court;
Let blushes dwell i' the country. Impudence!
Thou goddess of the palace, mistress of mistresses,
To whom the costly perfumed people pray,
Strike thou my forehead into dauntless marble,
Mine eyes to steady sapphires. Turn my visage;
And, if I must needs glow, let me blush inward,
That this immodest season may not spy

That scholar[n] in my cheeks, fool bashfulness;
That maid in the old time, whose flush of grace
Would never suffer her to get good clothes.
Our maids are wiser, and are less ashamed;
Save Grace the bawd,[n] I seldom hear grace named!

Hip. Nay, brother, you reach out o' the verge now[n]—
'Sfoot, the duke's son! settle your looks.

Ven. Pray, let me not be doubted.

Hip. My lord —

Enter LUSSURIOSO

Lus. Hippolito — be absent, leave us!

Hip. My lord, after long search, wary inquiries,
And politic siftings, I made choice of yon fellow,
Whom I guess rare for many deep employments:
This our age swims within him; and if Time
Had so much air, I should take him for Time,[n]
He is so near kin to this present minute.

Lus. 'Tis enough;
We thank thee: yet words are but great men's blanks;
Gold, though it be dumb, does utter the best thanks.
[*Gives him money.*

Hip. Your plenteous honour! an excellent fellow, my lord.

Lus. So, give us leave. [*Exit* HIPPOLITO.] Welcome, be not far off; we must be better acquainted: pish, be bold with us — thy hand.

Ven. With all my heart, i' faith: how dost, sweet musk-cat?
When shall we lie together?

Lus. [*Aside.*] Wondrous knave,
Gather him into boldness![n] 'sfoot, the slave's
Already as familiar as an ague,
And shakes me[n] at his pleasure. — Friend, I can
Forget myself in private; but elsewhere
I pray do you remember me.

Ven. O, very well, sir —
I conster myself saucy.
Lus. What hast been?
Of what profession?
Ven. A bone-setter.
Lus. A bone-setter!
Ven. A bawd, my lord —
One that sets bones together.
Lus. Notable bluntness!
Fit, fit for me; e'en trained up to my hand:
Thou hast been scrivener to much knavery, then?
Ven. 'Sfoot, to abundance, sir: I have been witness
To the surrenders of a thousand virgins:
And not so little;[n]
I have seen patrimonies washed a-pieces,[n]
Fruit-fields turned into bastards,
And in a world of acres
Not so much dust due to the heir 'twas left to
As would well gravel a petition.[n]
Lus. [*Aside.*] Fine villain! troth, I like him wondrously:
He's e'en shaped for my purpose. — Then thou know'st
I' th' world strange lust?
Ven. O Dutch lust! fulsome lust!
Drunken procreation! which begets
So many drunkards. Some fathers dread not
(Gone to bed in wine) to slide from the mother,
And cling the daughter-in-law;
Some uncles are adulterous with their nieces:
Brothers with brothers' wives. O hour of incest!
Any kin now, next to the rim o' th' sister,
Is men's meat in these days; and in the morning,
When they are up and dressed, and their mask on,
Who can perceive this, save that eternal eye,
That sees through flesh and all? Well, if anything be damned,
It will be twelve o'clock at night, that twelve

Will never scape;
It is the Judas of the hours, wherein
Honest salvation is betrayed to sin.
Lus. In troth, it is true; but let this talk glide.
It is our blood to err, though hell gape wide.
Ladies know Lucifer fell, yet still are proud.
Now, sir, wert thou as secret as thou'rt subtle,
And deeply fathomed into all estates,[n]
I would embrace thee for a near employment;
And thou shouldst swell in money, and be able
To make lame beggars crouch to thee.
Ven. My lord,
Secret! I ne'er had that disease o' the mother,
I praise my father: why are men made close,
But to keep thoughts in best? I grant you this,
Tell but some women a secret over night,
Your doctor may find it in the urinal i' the morning.
But, my lord —
Lus. So thou'rt confirmed in me,
And thus I enter thee.[n] [*Gives him money.*
Ven. This Indian devil[n]
Will quickly enter any man but a usurer;
He prevents that by entering the devil first.
Lus. Attend me. I am past my depth in lust,
And I must swim or drown. All my desires
Are levelled at a virgin not far from court,
To whom I have conveyed by messenger
Many waxed lines,[n] full of my neatest spirit,
And jewels that were able to ravish her
Without the help of man; all which and more
She (foolish chaste) sent back, the messengers
Receiving frowns for answers.
Ven. Possible!
'Tis a rare Phœnix,[n] whoe'er she be.
If your desires be such, she so repugnant,
In troth, my lord, I'd be revenged and marry her.
Lus. *Pish! the dowry of her blood and of her fortunes*

Are both too mean — good enough to be bad withal.
I'm one of that number can defend
Marriage is good; [n] yet rather keep a friend.
Give me my bed by stealth — there's true delight;
What breeds a loathing in't, but night by night!
Ven. A very fine religion!
Lus. Therefore thus
I'll trust thee in the business of my heart;
Because I see thee well-experienced
In this luxurious day wherein we breathe.
Go thou, and with a smooth enchanting tongue
Bewitch her ears, and cozen her of all grace:
Enter upon the portion of her soul —
Her honour, which she calls her chastity,[n]
And bring it into expense; [n] for honesty
Is like a stock of money laid to sleep [n]
Which, ne'er so little broke, does never keep.
Ven. You have gi'en't the tang,[n] i' faith, my lord:
Make known the lady to me, and my brain
Shall swell with strange invention: I will move it,
Till I expire with speaking, and drop down
Without a word to save me — but I'll work —
Lus. We thank thee, and will raise thee. —
Receive her name; it is the only daughter to Madam
Gratiana, the late widow.
Ven. [*Aside.*] O my sister, my sister!
Lus. Why dost walk aside?
Ven. My lord, I was thinking how I might begin:
As thus, O lady — or twenty hundred devices —
Her very bodkin will put a man in.[n]
Lus. Aye, or the wagging of her hair.
Ven. No, that shall put you in, my lord.
Lus. Shall't? why, content. Dost know the daughter then?
Ven. O, excellent well by sight.
Lus. That was her brother,
That did prefer thee to us.

Ven. My lord, I think so;
I knew I had seen him somewhere —
Lus. And therefore, prythee, let thy heart to him
Be as a virgin close.
Ven. O my good lord.
Lus. We may laugh at that simple age within him.
Ven. Ha, ha, ha!
Lus. Himself being made the subtle instrument,
To wind up a good fellow.
Ven. That's I, my lord.
Lus. That's thou,
To entice and work his sister.
Ven. A pure novice!
Lus. 'Twas finely managed.
Ven. Gallantly carried!
A pretty perfumed villain!
Lus. I've bethought me,
If she prove chaste still and immovable,
Venture upon the mother; and with gifts,
As I will furnish thee, begin with her.
Ven. O, fie, fie! that's the wrong end my lord.
'Tis mere impossible that a mother, by any gifts, should become a bawd to her own daughter!
Lus. Nay, then, I see thou'rt but a puisne
In the subtle mystery of a woman.[n]
Why, 'tis held now no dainty dish: the name
Is so in league with the age, that nowadays
It does eclipse three quarters of a mother.
Ven. Does it so, my lord?
Let me alone, then, to eclipse the fourth.
Lus. Why, well said — come, I'll furnish thee, but first
Swear to be true in all.
Ven. True!
Lus. Nay, but swear.
Ven. Swear? —
I hope your honour little doubts my faith.

Lus. Yet, for my humour's sake, 'cause I love swearing —
Ven. 'Cause you love swearing, — 'slud, I will.
Lus. Why, enough!
Ere long look to be made of better stuff.
Ven. That will do well indeed, my lord.
Lus. Attend me. [*Exit.*
Ven. O!
Now let me burst. I've eaten noble poison;
We are made strange fellows, brother, innocent villains!
Wilt not be angry, when thou hear'st on't, think'st thou?
I' faith, thou shalt: swear me to foul my sister!
Sword, I durst make a promise of him to thee;
Thou shalt disheir him; it shall be thine honour.
And yet, now angry froth is down in me,
It would not prove the meanest policy,
In this disguise, to try the faith of both.
Another might have had the selfsame office;
Some slave that would have wrought effectually,
Aye, and perhaps o'erwrought 'em; therefore I,
Being thought-travelled, will apply myself
Unto the selfsame form, forget my nature,
As if no part about me were kin to 'em,
So touch em; — though I durst almost for good
Venture my lands in Heaven upon their blood. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

A Room in ANTONIO'S *House*

Enter ANTONIO, *whose* Wife *the* Duchess' Youngest Son *ravished, discovering her dead body to* HIPPOLITO, PIERO, *and* Lords

Ant. Draw nearer, lords, and be sad witnesses
Of a fair comely building newly fallen,

Being falsely undermined. Violent rape
Has played a glorious act: behold, my lords,
A sight that strikes man out of me.
Piero. That virtuous lady!
Ant. Precedent for wives!
Hip. The blush of many women, whose chaste presence
Would e'en call shame up to their cheeks, and make
Pale wanton sinners have good colours —
Ant. Dead!
Her honour first drank poison, and her life,
Being fellows in one house, did pledge her honour.
Piero. O, grief of many!
Ant. I marked not this before —
A prayer-book, the pillow to her cheek:
This was her rich confection; and another
Placed in her right hand, with a leaf tucked up,
Pointing to these words —
Melius virtute mori, quam per dedecus vivere:[n]
True and effectual it is indeed.
Hip. My lord, since you invite us to your sorrows,
Let's truly taste 'em, that with equal comfort,
As to ourselves, we may relieve your wrongs:
We have grief too, that yet walks without tongue;
Curæ leves loquuntur, maiores stupent.[n]
Ant. You deal with truth,[n] my lord;
Lend me but your attentions, and I'll cut
Long grief into short words. Last revelling night,
When torch-light made an artificial noon
About the court, some courtiers in the masque,
Putting on better faces than their own,
Being full of fraud and flattery — amongst whom
The duchess' youngest son (that moth to honour)
Filled up a room, and with long lust to eat
Into my warren, amongst all the ladies
Singled out that dear form, who ever lived
As cold in lust as she is now in death

(Which that step-duchess' monster knew too well),
And therefore in the height of all the revels,
When music was heard loudest, courtiers busiest,
And ladies great with laughter — O vicious minute!
Unfit but for relation to be spoke of:
Then with a face more impudent than his vizard,
He harried her amidst a throng of panders,
That live upon damnation of both kinds,[n]
And fed the ravenous vulture of his lust.
O death to think on't! She, her honour forced,
Deemed it a nobler dowry for her name
To die with poison than to live with shame.
Hip. A wondrous lady! of rare fire compact;[n]
She has made her name an empress by that act.
Piero. My lord, what judgement follows the offender?
Ant. Faith, none, my lord; it cools, and is deferred.
Piero. Delay the doom for rape!
Ant. O, you must note who 'tis should die,
The duchess' son! she'll look to be a saver:
"Judgement, in this age, is near kin to favour."
Hip. Nay, then, step forth, thou bribeless officer:
[*Draws his sword.*
I'll bind you all in steel, to bind you surely;
Here let your oaths meet, to be kept and paid,
Which else will stick like rust, and shame the blade;
Strengthen my vow that if, at the next sitting,
Judgement speak all in gold, and spare the blood
Of such a serpent, e'en before their seats
To let his soul out, which long since was found
Guilty in Heaven —
All. We swear it, and will act it.
Ant. Kind gentlemen, I thank you in mine ire.
Hip. 'Twere pity
The ruins of so fair a monument
Should not be dipped in the defacer's blood.
Piero. Her funeral shall be wealthy; for her name
Merits a tomb of pearl. My lord Antonio,

For this time wipe your lady from your eyes;
No doubt our grief and yours may one day court it,
When we are more familiar with revenge.
Ant. That is my comfort, gentlemen, and I joy
In this one happiness above the rest,
Which will be called a miracle at last;
That, being an old man, I'd a wife so chaste.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND

SCENE I

A Room in GRATIANA'S *House*

Enter CASTIZA

Cas. How hardly shall that maiden be beset,
Whose only fortunes are her constant thoughts!
That has no other child's part but her honour,
That keeps her low and empty in estate;
Maids and their honours are like poor beginners;
Were not sin rich, there would be fewer sinners;
Why had not virtue a revenue? Well,
I know the cause, 'twould have impoverished hell.

Enter DONDOLO

How now, Dondolo?

Don. Madonna, there is one as they say, a thing of flesh and blood — a man, I take him by his beard, that would very desirously mouth to mouth with you.

Cas. What's that?

Don. Show his teeth in your company.

Cas. I understand thee not.

Don. Why, speak with you, madonna.

Cas. Why, say so, madman, and cut off a great deal of dirty way; had it not been better spoke in ordinary words, that one would speak with me?

Don. Ha, ha! that's as ordinary as two shillings. I would strive a little to show myself in my place; a

gentleman-usher scorns to use the phrase and fancy of a serving-man.

Cas. Yours be your own, sir; go, direct him hither;
[*Exit* DONDOLO.
I hope some happy tidings from my brother,
That lately travelled, whom my soul affects.
Here he comes.

Enter VENDICE, *disguised*

Ven. Lady, the best of wishes to your sex —
Fair skins and new gowns.
Cas. O, they shall thank you, sir.
Whence this?
Ven. O, from a dear and worthy mighty friend.
Cas. From whom?
Ven. The duke's son!
Cas. Receive that. [*Boxes his ear.*
I swore I would put anger in my hand,
And pass the virgin limits of my sex,
To him that next appeared in that base office,
To be his sin's attorney. Bear to him
That figure of my hate upon thy cheek,
Whilst 'tis yet hot, and I'll reward thee for't;
Tell him my honour shall have a rich name,
When several harlots shall share his with shame.
Farewell; commend me to him in my hate. [*Exit.*
Ven. It is the sweetest box that e'er my nose came nigh;
The finest drawn-work cuff that e'er was worn;
I'll love this blow for ever, and this cheek
Shall still henceforward take the wall [n] of this.
O, I'm above my tongue: [n] most constant sister,
In this thou hast right honourable shown;
Many are called by their honour, that have none;
Thou art approved for ever in my thoughts.
It is not in the power of words to taint thee.

And yet for the salvation of my oath,
As my resolve in that point, I will lay
Hard siege unto my mother, though I know
A siren's tongue could not bewitch her so.
Mass, fitly here she comes! thanks, my disguise —
Madam, good afternoon.

Enter GRATIANA

Gra. Y'are welcome, sir.
Ven. The next of Italy commends him to you,
Our mighty expectation, the duke's son.
Gra. I think myself much honoured that he pleases
To rank me in his thoughts.
Ven. So may you, lady:
One that is like to be our sudden duke;[n]
The crown gapes for him every tide,[n] and then
Commander o'er us all; do but think on him,
How blessed were they, now that could pleasure him —
E'en with anything almost!
Gra. Aye, save their honour.
Ven. Tut, one would let a little of that go too,
And ne'er be seen in't — ne'er be seen in't, mark you;
I'd wink, and let it go.
Gra. Marry, but I would not.
Ven. Marry but I would, I hope; I know you would too,
If you'd that blood now, which you gave your daughter.
To her indeed 'tis this wheel[n] comes about;
That man that must be all this, perhaps ere morning
(For his white father does but mould away),
Has long desired your daughter.
Gra. Desired?
Ven. Nay, but hear me;
He desires now, that will command hereafter:
Therefore be wise. I speak as more a friend
To you than him: madam, I know you're poor,
And, 'lack the day!

There are too many poor ladies already;
Why should you wax the number? 'Tis despised.
Live wealthy, rightly understand the world,
And chide away that foolish country girl
Keeps company with your daughter — Chastity.
Gra. O fie, fie! the riches of the world cannot hire
A mother to such a most unnatural task.
Ven. No, but a thousand angels can.
Men have no power, angels must work you to't:
The world descends into such baseborn evils,
That forty angels can make fourscore devils.
There will be fools still, I perceive — still fools.
Would I be poor, dejected, scorned of greatness,
Swept from the palace, and see others' daughters
Spring with the dew o' the court, having mine own
So much desired and loved by the duke's son?
No, I would raise my state upon her breast;
And call her eyes my tenants; I would count
My yearly maintenance upon her cheeks;
Take coach upon her lip; and all her parts
Should keep men after men,[n] and I would ride
In pleasure upon pleasure.
You took great pains for her, once when it was;
Let her requite it now, though it be but some.
You brought her forth: she may well bring you home.
Gra. O Heavens! this o'ercomes me!
Ven. [*Aside.*] Not, I hope, already?
Gra. [*Aside.*] It is too strong for me; men know that know us,
We are so weak their words can overthrow us;
He touched me nearly, made my virtues bate,
When his tongue struck upon my poor estate.
Ven. [*Aside.*] I e'en quake to proceed, my spirit turns edge.
I fear me she's unmothered; yet I'll venture.
"That woman is all male, whom none can enter:" —
What think you now, lady? Speak, are you wiser?

What said advancement to you? Thus it said:
The daugher's fall lifts up the mother's head.
Did it not, madam? But I'll swear it does
In many places: tut, this age fears no man.
"'Tis no shame to be bad, because 'tis common."
Gra. Aye, that's the comfort on't.
Ven. The comfort on't!
I keep the best for last — can these persuade you
To forget Heaven — and — [*Gives her money.*
Gra. Aye, these are they —
Ven. O!
Gra. That enchant our sex. These are
The means that govern our affections — that woman
Will not be troubled with the mother long,
That sees the comfortable shine of you:
I blush to think what for your sakes I'll do.
Ven. [*Aside.*] O suffering Heaven, with thy invisible finger,
E'en at this instant turn the precious side
Of both mine eyeballs inward, not to see myself!
Gra. Look you, sir.
Ven. Hollo.
Gra. Let this thank your pains.
Ven. O, you're kind, madam.
Gra. I'll see how I can move.
Ven. Your words will sting.
Gra. If she be still chaste, I'll ne'er call her mine.
Ven. Spoke truer than you meant it.
Gra. Daughter Castiza.

Re-enter CASTIZA

Cas. Madam.
Ven. O, she's yonder;
Meet her. — Troops of celestial soldiers guard her heart.
Yon dam has devils enough to take her part.
Cas. Madam, what makes yon evil-officed man
In presence of you?

Gra. Why?
Cas. He lately brought
Immodest writing sent from the duke's son,
To tempt me to dishonourable act.
Gra. Dishonourable act! — good honourable fool,
That wouldst be honest, 'cause thou wouldst be so,
Producing no one reason but thy will.
And't has a good report, prettily commended,
But pray, by whom? Poor people, ignorant people;
The better sort, I'm sure, cannot abide it.
And by what rule should we square out our lives,
But by our betters' actions? O, if thou knew'st
What 'twere to lose it, thou would never keep it!
But there's a cold curse laid upon all maids,
Whilst others clip the sun, they clasp the shades.
Virginity is paradise locked up.
You cannot come by yourselves[n] without fee;
And 'twas decreed that man should keep the key!
Deny advancement! treasure! the duke's son!
Cas. I cry you mercy! lady, I mistook you!
Pray did you see my mother? which way went you?
Pray God, I have not lost her.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Prettily put by!
Gra. Are you as proud to me, as coy to him?
Do you not know me now?
Cas. Why, are you she?
The world's so changed one shape into another,
It is a wise child now that knows[n] her mother.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Most right i' faith.
Gra. I owe your cheek my hand
For that presumption now; but I'll forget it.
Come, you shall leave those childish 'haviours,
And understand your time. Fortunes flow to you;
What, will you be a girl?
If all feared drowning that spy waves ashore,
Gold would grow rich, and all the merchants poor.
Cas. *It is a pretty* saying of a wicked one;

But methinks now it does not show so well
Out of your mouth — better in his!
Ven. [*Aside.*] Faith, bad enough in both,
Were I in earnest, as I'll seem no less. —
I wonder, lady, your own mother's words
Cannot be taken, nor stand in full force.
'Tis honesty you urge; what's honesty?
'Tis but Heaven's beggar; and what woman is
So foolish to keep honesty,
And be not able to keep herself? No,
Times are grown wiser, and will keep less charge.[n]
A maid that has small portion now intends
To break up house, and live upon her friends;
How blessed are you! you have happiness alone;
Others must fall to thousands, you to one,
Sufficient in himself to make your forehead
Dazzle the world with jewels, and petitionary people [n]
Start at your presence.
Gra. O, if I were young, I should be ravished!
Cas. Aye, to lose your honour!
Ven. 'Slid, how can you lose your honour
To deal with my lord's grace?
He'll add more honour to it by his title;
Your mother will tell you how.
Gra. That I will.
Ven. O, think upon the pleasure of the palace!
Secured ease and state! the stirring meats,
Ready to move out of the dishes, that e'en now
Quicken when they are eaten!
Banquets abroad by torch-light! music! sports!
Bareheaded vassals, that had ne'er the fortune
To keep on their own hats, but let horns wear 'em! [n]
Nine coaches waiting — hurry, hurry, hurry —
Cas. Aye, to the devil.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Aye, to the devil! — To the duke, by *my faith.*

Gra. Aye, to the duke: daughter, you'd scorn to think o' the devil, an you were there once.

Ven. [*Aside.*] True, for most there are as proud as he for his heart, i' faith. —

Who'd sit at home in a neglected room,
Dealing her short-lived beauty to the pictures,
That are as useless as old men, when those
Poorer in face and fortune than herself
Walk with a hundred acres on their backs,
Fair meadows cut into green foreparts? O,
It was the greatest blessing ever happened to woman
When farmers' sons agreed and met again,
To wash their hands, and come up gentlemen!
The commonwealth has flourished ever since:
Lands that were mete by the rod, that labour's spared:
Tailors ride down, and measure 'em by the yard.
Fair trees, those comely foretops of the field,
Are cut to maintain head-tires — much untold.
All thrives but chastity; she lies a-cold.
Nay, shall I come nearer to you? mark but this:
Why are there so few honest women, but because 'tis the poorer profession? that's accounted best that's best followed; least in trade, least in fashion; and that's not honesty, believe it; and do but note the love and dejected price of it —
Lose but a pearl, we search, and cannot brook it:
But that once gone, who is so mad to look it?

Gra. Troth, he says true.

Cas. False! I defy you both:
I have endured you with an ear of fire;
Your tongues have struck hot irons on my face.
Mother, come from that poisonous woman there.

Gra. Where?

Cas. Do you not see her? she's too inward, then!
Slave, perish in thy office! you Heavens, please
Henceforth *to make* the mother a disease,
Which first begins with me: yet I've outgone you. [*Exit.*

Ven. [*Aside.*] O angels, clap your wings upon the skies,
And give this virgin crystal plaudites!
Gra. Peevish, coy, foolish! — but return this answer,
My lord shall be most welcome, when his pleasure
Conducts him this way. I will sway mine own.
Women with women can work best alone. [*Exit.*
Ven. Indeed, I'll tell him so.
O, more uncivil, more unnatural,
Than those base-titled creatures that look downward;[n]
Why does not Heaven turn black, or with a frown
Undo the world? Why does not earth start up,
And strike the sins that tread upon't? O,
Were't not for gold and women, there would be no damnation.
Hell would look like a lord's great kitchen without fire in't.
But 'twas decreed, before the world began,
That they should be the hooks to catch at man. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

An Apartment in the Duke's *Palace*

Enter LUSSURIOSO, *with* HIPPOLITO

Lus. I much applaud
Thy judgement; thou art well-read in a fellow;
And 'tis the deepest art to study man.
I know this, which I never learnt in schools,
The world's divided into knaves and fools.
Hip. [*Aside.*] Knave in your face, my lord — behind your back —
Lus. And I much thank thee, that thou hast preferred
A fellow of discourse, well-mingled,
And whose brain time hath seasoned.
Hip. True, my lord,
We shall find season[n] once, I hope. — [*Aside.*] O villain!
To make such an unnatural slave of me — but —

Lus. Mass, here he comes.
Hip. [*Aside.*] And now shall I have free leave to depart.
Lus. Your absence, leave us.
Hip. [*Aside.*] Are not my thoughts true?
I must remove; but, brother, you may stay.
Heart! we are both made bawds a new-found way!
[*Exit.*

Enter VENDICE, *disguised*

Lus. Now we're an even number, a third man's dangerous,
Especially her brother; — say, be free,
Have I a pleasure toward —
Ven. O my lord!
Lus. Ravish me in thine answer; art thou rare?
Hast thou beguiled her of salvation,
And rubbed hell o'er with honey? Is she a woman?
Ven. In all but in desire.
Lus. Then she's in nothing —
I bate in courage now.
Ven. The words I brought
Might well have made indifferent honest naught.
A right good woman in these days is changed
Into white money with less labour far;
Many a maid has turned to Mahomet
With easier working: I durst undertake,
Upon the pawn and forfeit of my life,
With half those words to flat a Puritan's wife.
But she is close and good; yet 'tis a doubt
By this time. — O, the mother, the mother!
Lus. I never thought their sex had been a wonder,
Until this minute. What fruit from the mother?
Ven. [*Aside.*] How must I blister my soul, be forsworn,
Or shame the woman that received me first!
I will be true: thou liv'st not to proclaim.

Spoke to a dying man, shame has no shame. —
My lord.

Lus. Who's that? [n]

Ven. Here's none but I, my lord.

Lus. What would thy haste utter?

Ven. Comfort.

Lus. Welcome.

Ven. The maid being dull, having no mind to travel
Into unknown lands, what did I straight,
But set spurs to the mother? golden spurs
Will put her to a false gallop in a trice.

Lus. Is't possible that in this
The mother should be damned before the daughter?

Ven. O, that's good manners, my lord; the mother for her age must go foremost, you know.

Lus. Thou'st spoke that true! but where comes in this comfort?

Ven. In a fine place, my lord, — the unnatural mother
Did with her tongue so hard beset her honour,
That the poor fool was struck to silent wonder;
Yet still the maid, like an unlighted taper,
Was cold and chaste, save that her mother's breath
Did blow fire on her cheeks. The girl departed;
But the good ancient madam, half mad, threw me
These promising words, which I took deeply note of:
"My lord shall be most welcome" —

Lus. Faith, I thank her.

Ven. "When his pleasure conducts him this way" —

Lus. That shall be soon, i' faith.

Ven. "I will sway mine own" —

Lus. She does the wiser: I commend her for't.

Ven. "Women with women can work best alone."

Lus. By this light, and so they can; give 'em their due, men are not comparable to 'em.

Ven. No, that's true; for you shall have one woman knit more in an hour, than any man can ravel again in seven-and-twenty years.

Lus. Now my desires are happy; I'll make 'em freemen now.
Thou art a precious fellow; faith, I love thee;
Be wise and make it thy revenue; beg, beg;
What office couldst thou be ambitious for?

Ven. Office, my lord! marry, if I might have my wish, I would have one that was never begged yet.

Lus. Nay, then, thou canst have none.

Ven. Yes, my lord, I could pick out another office yet; nay, and keep a horse and drab upon't.

Lus. Prithee, good bluntness, tell me.

Ven. Why, I would desire but this, my lord — to have all the fees behind the arras, and all the farthingales that fall plump about twelve o'clock at night upon the rushes.

Lus. Thou'rt a mad, apprehensive knave; dost think to make any great purchase of that?

Ven. O, 'tis an unknown thing, my lord; I wonder't has been missed so long.

Lus. Well, this night I'll visit her, and 'tis till then
A year in my desires — farewell, attend
Trust me with thy preferment.

Ven. My loved lord!

[*Exit* LUSSURIOSO.

O, shall I kill him o' th' wrong side now? no!
Sword, thou wast never a backbiter yet.
I'll pierce him to his face; he shall die looking upon me.
Thy veins are swelled with lust, this shall unfill 'em.
Great men were gods, if beggars could not kill 'em.
Forgive me, Heaven, to call my mother wicked!
O, lessen not my days upon the earth,[n]
I cannot honour her. By this, I fear me,
Her tongue has turned my sister unto use.
I was a villain not to be forsworn
To this our lecherous hope, the duke's son;
For lawyers, merchants, some divines, and all,
Count beneficial perjury[n] a sin small.

It shall go hard yet, but I'll guard her honour,
And keep the ports sure. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

A Corridor in the Palace

Enter VENDICE, *still disguised, and* HIPPOLITO

Hip. Brother, how goes the world? I would know news of you.
But I have news to tell you.
Ven. What, in the name of knavery?
Hip. Knavery, faith;
This vicious old duke's worthily abused;
The pen of his bastard writes him cuckold?
Ven. His bastard?
Hip. Pray, believe it; he and the duchess
By night meet in their linen; they have been seen
By stair-foot panders.
Ven. O, sin foul and deep!
Great faults are winked at when the duke's asleep.
See, see, here comes the Spurio.
Hip. Monstrous luxur! 10
Ven. Unbraced! two of his valiant bawds with him!
O, there's a wicked whisper; hell's in his ear.
Stay, let's observe his passage —

Enter SPURIO *and* Servants

Spu. O, but are you sure on't?
1*st Ser.* My lord, most sure on't; for 'twas spoke by one,
That is most inward with the duke's son's lust,
That he intends within this hour to steal
Unto Hippolito's sister, whose chaste life
The mother has corrupted for his use.

Spu. Sweet word! sweet occasion! faith, then, brother,
I'll disinherit you in as short time
As I was when I was begot in haste.
I'll damn[n] you at your pleasure: precious deed!
After your lust, O, 'twill be fine to bleed.
Come, let our passing out be soft and wary.
[*Exeunt* SPURIO *and* Servants.
Ven. Mark! there; there;[n] that step; now to the duchess!
This their second meeting writes the duke cuckold
With new additions — his horns newly revived.
Night! thou that look'st like funeral heralds' fees,[n]
Torn down betimes i' the morning, thou hang'st fitly
To grace those sins that have no grace at all.
Now 'tis full sea abed over the world:
There's juggling of all sides; some that were maids
E'en at sunset, are now perhaps i' the toll-book.
This woman in immodest thin apparel
Lets in her friend by water; here a dame
Cunning nails leather hinges to a door,
To avoid proclamation.
Now cuckolds are coining, apace, apace, apace, apace!
And careful sisters spin that thread i' the night,
That does maintain them and their bawds i' the day.
Hip. You flow well, brother.
Ven. Pooh! I'm shallow yet;
Too sparing and too modest; shall I tell thee?
If every trick were told that's dealt by night,
There are few here that would not blush outright.
Hip. I am of that belief too. Who's this comes?
Ven. The duke's son up so late? Brother, fall back,
And you shall learn some mischief. My good lord!

Enter LUSSURIOSO

Lus. Piato! why, the man I wished for! Come,
I do embrace this season for the fittest
To taste of that young lady.

Ven. [*Aside.*] Heart and hell!
Hip. [*Aside.*] Damned villain!
Ven. [*Aside.*] I have no way now to cross it, but to kill him.
Lus. Come, only thou and I.
Ven. My lord! my lord!
Lus. Why dost thou start us?
Ven. I'd almost forgot — the bastard!
Lus. What of him?
Ven. This night, this hour, this minute, now —
Lus. What? what?
Ven. Shadows the duchess —
Lus. Horrible word!
Ven. And (like strong poison) eats
Into the duke your father's forehead.
Lus. O!
Ven. He makes horn-royal.
Lus. Most ignoble slave!
Ven. This is the fruit of two beds.[n]
Lus. I am mad.
Ven. That passage he trod warily.
Lus. He did?
Ven. And hushed his villains every step he took.
Lus. His villains! I'll confound them.
Ven. Take 'em finely — finely, now.
Lus. The duchess' chamber-door shall not control me. [*Exeunt* LUSSURIOSO *and* VENDICE.
Hip. Good, happy, swift: there's gunpowder i' the court,
Wildfire at midnight. In this heedless fury
He may show violence to cross himself.
I'll follow the event. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

The DUKE'S *Bedchamber.* — *The* Duke *and* Duchess *in bed*

Enter LUSSURIOSO *and* VENDICE, *disguised*

Lus. Where is that villain?
Ven. Softly, my lord, and you may take 'em twisted.
Lus. I care not how.
Ven. O! 'twill be glorious
To kill 'em doubled, when they're heaped. Be soft, my lord.
Lus. Away! my spleen is not so lazy: thus and thus
I'll shake their eyelids ope, and with my sword
Shut 'em again for ever. Villain! strumpet!
Duke. You upper guard, defend us!
Duch. Treason! treason!
Duke. O, take me not in sleep!
I have great sins; I must have days,
Nay, months, dear son, with penitential heaves,
To lift 'em out, and not to die unclear.
O, thou wilt kill me both in Heaven and here.
Lus. I am amazed to death.
Duke. Nay, villain, traitor,
Worse than the foulest epithet; now I'll gripe thee
E'en with the nerves of wrath, and throw thy head
Amongst the lawyers![n] — guard!

Enter AMBITIOSO, SUPERVACUO, HIPPOLITO *and* Lords

1st Lord. How comes the quiet of your grace disturbed?
Duke. This boy, that should be myself after me,
Would be myself before me; and in heat
Of that ambition bloodily rushed in,
Intending to depose me in my bed.

2nd Lord. Duty and natural loyalty forfend!
Duch. He called his father villain, and me strumpet,
A word that I abhor to file my lips with.
Amb. That was not so well done, brother.
Lus. [*Aside.*] I am abused — I know there's no excuse
can do me good.
Ven. [*Aside.*] 'Tis now good policy to be from sight;
His vicious purpose to our sister's honour
I crossed beyond our thought.
Hip. You little dreamed his father slept here.
Ven. O, 'twas far beyond me:
But since it fell so — without frightful words,
Would he had killed him, 'twould have eased our swords.
Duke. Be comforted, our duchess, he shall die.
[*Exeunt* VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO.
Lus. Where's this slave-pander now? out of mine eye,
Guilty of this abuse.

Enter SPURIO *with* Servants

Spu. Y' are villains, fablers!
You have knaves' chins and harlots' tongues; you lie;
And I will damn you with one meal a day.
1st Ser. O good my lord!
Spu. 'Sblood, you shall never sup.
2nd Ser. O, I beseech you, sir!
Spu. To let my sword catch cold so long, and miss him!
1st Ser. Troth, my lord, 'twas his intent to meet there.
Spu. Heart! he's yonder.
Ha, what news here? is the day out o' the socket,
That it is noon at midnight? the court up?
How comes the guard so saucy with his elbows?
Lus. The bastard here?
Nay, then the truth of my intent shall out;
My lord and father, hear me.
Duke. Bear him hence.
Lus. I can with loyalty excuse.

Duke. Excuse? to prison with the villain!
Death shall not long lag after him.
Spu. Good, i' faith: then 'tis not much amiss.
Lus. Brothers, my best release lies on your tongues;
I pray, persuade for me.
Amb. It is our duties; make yourself sure of us.
Sup. We'll sweat in pleading.
Lus. And I may live to thank you.
[*Exit with* Lords.
Amb. No, thy death shall thank me better.
Spu. He's gone; I'll after him,
And know his trespass; seem to bear a part
In all his ills, but with a puritan heart.[n]
[*Exit with* Servants.
Amb. Now, brother, let our hate and love be woven
So subtlely together, that in speaking one word for his life,
We may make three for his death:
The craftiest pleader gets most gold for breath.
Sup. Set on, I'll not be far behind you, brother.
Duke. Is't possible a son should be disobedient as far as the sword? It is the highest: he can go no farther.
Amb. My gracious lord, take pity —
Duke. Pity, boys!
Amb. Nay, we'd be loath to move your grace too much;
We know the trespass is unpardonable,
Black, wicked, and unnatural.
Sup. In a son! O, monstrous!
Amb. Yet, my lord,
A duke's soft hand strokes the rough head of law,
And makes it lie smooth.
Duke. But my hand shall ne'er do't.
Amb. That as you please, my lord.
Sup. We must needs confess.
Some fathers would have entered into hate
So deadly-pointed, that before his eyes

He would ha' seen the execution sound [n]
Without corrupted favour.
Amb. But, my lord,
Your grace may live the wonder of all times,
In pardoning that offence, which never yet
Had face to beg a pardon.
Duke. Honey, how's this?
Amb. Forgive him, good my lord; he's your own son:
And I must needs say, 'twas the viler done.
Sup. He's the next heir: yet this true reason gathers,
None can possess that dispossess their fathers.
Be merciful! —
Duke. [*Aside.*] Here's no stepmother's wit;
I'll try them both upon their love and hate.
Amb. Be merciful — although —
Duke. You have prevailed.
My wrath, like flaming wax, hath spent itself;
I know 'twas but some peevish moon in him;
Go, let him be released.
Sup. [*Aside.*] 'Sfoot, how now, brother?
Amb. Your grace doth please to speak beside your spleen;
I would it were so happy.
Duke. Why, go, release him.
Sup. O my good lord! I know the fault's too weighty
And full of general loathing: too inhuman,
Rather by all men's voices worthy death.
Duke. 'Tis true too; here, then, receive this signet.
Doom shall pass;
Direct it to the judges; he shall die
Ere many days. Make haste.
Amb. All speed that may be.
We could have wished his burden not so sore:
We knew your grace did but delay before.
[*Exeunt* AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO.
Duke. Here's envy with a poor thin cover o'er't;
Like scarlet hid in lawn, easily spied through.

This their ambition by the mother's side
Is dangerous, and for safety must be purged.
I will prevent their envies; sure it was
But some mistaken fury in our son,
Which these aspiring boys would climb upon:
He shall be released suddenly.

Enter Nobles

1st Noble. Good morning to your grace.
Duke. Welcome, my lords.
2nd Noble. Our knees shall take
Away the office of our feet for ever,
Unless your grace bestow a father's eye
Upon the clouded fortunes of your son,
And in compassionate virtue grant him that,
Which makes e'en mean men happy — liberty.
Duke. How seriously their loves and honours woo
For that which I am about to pray them do!
Arise, my lords; your knees sign his release.
We freely pardon him.
1st Noble. We owe your grace much thanks, and he much duty. [*Exeunt* Nobles.
Duke. It well becomes that judge to nod at crimes,
That does commit greater himself, and lives.
I may forgive a disobedient error,
That expect pardon for adultery,
And in my old days am a youth in lust.
Many a beauty have I turned to poison
In the denial,[n] covetous of all.
Age hot is like a monster to be seen;
My hairs are white, and yet my sins are green.

ACT THE THIRD

SCENE I

A Room in the Palace

Enter AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO

Sup. Brother, let my opinion sway you once;
I speak it for the best, to have him die
Surest and soonest; if the signet come
Unto the judge's hand, why then his doom
Will be deferred till sittings and court-days,
Juries, and further. Faiths are bought and sold;
Oaths in these days are but the skin of gold.
Amb. In troth, 'tis true too.
Sup. Then let's set by the judges,
And fall to the officers; 'tis but mistaking
The duke our father's meaning; and where he named
"Ere many days" — 'tis but forgetting that,
And have him die i' the morning.
Amb. Excellent!
Then am I heir! duke in a minute!
Sup. [*Aside.*] Nay,
An he were once puffed out, here is a pin
Should quickly prick your bladder.
Amb. Blessed occasion!
He being packed, we'll have some trick and wile
To wind our younger brother out of prison,
That lies in for the rape. The lady's dead,
And people's thoughts will soon be burièd.
Sup. We may with safety do't, and live and feed;
The duchess' sons are too proud to bleed.

Amb. We are, i' faith, to say true — come, let's not linger:
I'll to the officers; go you before,
And set an edge upon the executioner.
Sup. Let me alone to grind. [*Exit.*
Amb. Meet farewell!
I am next now; I rise just in that place,
Where thou'rt cut off; upon thy neck, kind brother;
The falling of one head lifts up another. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

The Courtyard of a Prison

Enter LUSSURIOSO *with* Nobles

Lus. My lords, I am so much indebted to your loves
For this, O, this delivery —
1*st Noble.* Put our duties, my lord, unto the hopes that grow in you.
Lus. If e'er I live to be myself,[n] I'll thank you.
O liberty, thou sweet and heavenly dame!
But hell for prison is too mild a name. [*Exeunt.*

Enter AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO, *with* Officers

Amb. Officers, here's the duke's signet, your firm warrant,
Brings the command of present death along with it
Unto our brother, the duke's son; we are sorry
That we are so unnaturally employed
In such an unkind office, fitter far
For enemies than brothers.
Sup. But, you know,
The duke's command must be obeyed.
1*st Off.* It must and shall, my lord. This morning, then
So suddenly?

Amb. Aye, alas! poor, good soul!
He must breakfast betimes; the executioner
Stands ready to put forth his cowardly valour.
2nd Off. Already?
Sup. Already, i' faith. O sir, destruction hies,
And that is least imprudent,[n] soonest dies.
1st Off. Troth, you say true. My lord, we take our leaves:
Our office shall be sound;[n] we'll not delay
The third part of a minute.
Amb. Therein you show
Yourselves good men and upright. Officers,
Pray, let him die as private as he may;
Do him that favour; for the gaping people
Will but trouble him at his prayers.
And make him curse and swear, and so die black.
Will you be so far kind?
1st Off. It shall be done, my lord.
Amb. Why, we do thank you; if we live to be —
You shall have a better office.
2nd Off. Your good lordship —
Sup. Commend us to the scaffold in our tears.
1st Off. We'll weep, and do your commendations.
Amb. Fine fools in office![n] [*Exeunt* Officers.
Sup. Things fall out so fit!
Amb. So happily! come, brother! ere next clock,
His head will be made serve a bigger block. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Inside a Prison

Enter the Duchess' Youngest Son *and* Keeper

Y. Son. Keeper!
Keep. My lord.
Y. Son. No news lately from our brothers?
Are they unmindful of us?

Keep. My lord, a messenger came newly in,
And brought this from 'em.
Y. Son. Nothing but paper-comforts?
I looked for my delivery before this,
Had they been worth their oaths. — Prithee, be from us.
[*Exit* Keeper.
Now what say you, forsooth? speak out, I pray.
[*Reads the letter.*] "Brother, be of good cheer";
'Slud, it begins like a whore with good cheer.
"Thou shalt not be long a prisoner."
Not six-and-thirty years, like a bankrupt — I think so.
"We have thought upon a device to get thee out by a trick."
By a trick! pox o' your trick, an' it be so long a playing.
"And so rest comforted, be merry, and expect it suddenly!"
Be merry! hang merry, draw and quarter merry; I'll be mad. Is't not strange that a man should lie-in a whole month for a woman? Well, we shall see how sudden our brothers will be in their promise. I must expect still a trick: I shall not be long a prisoner. How now, what news?

Re-enter Keeper

Keep. Bad news, my lord; I am discharged of you.
Y. Son. Slave! call'st thou that bad news? I thank you, brothers.
Keep. My lord, 'twill prove so. Here comes the officers,
Into whose hands I must commit you.
Y. Son. Ha, officers! what? why?

Enter Officers

1*st Off.* You must pardon us, my lord:
Our office must be sound: for here is our warrant,
The signet from the duke; you must straight suffer.

Y. Son. Suffer! I'll suffer you to begone; I'll suffer you
To come no more; what would you have me suffer?
2nd Off. My lord, those words were better changed to prayers.
The time's but brief with you: prepare to die.
Y. Son. Sure, 'tis not so!
3rd Off. It is too true, my lord.
Y. Son. I tell you 'tis not; for the duke my father
Deferred me till next sitting; and I look,
E'en every minute, threescore times an hour,
For a release, a trick wrought by my brothers.
1st Off. A trick, my lord! if you expect such comfort,
Your hope's as fruitless as a barren woman:
Your brothers were the unhappy messengers
That brought this powerful token[n] for your death.
Y. Son. My brothers? no, no.
2nd Off. 'Tis most true, my lord.
Y. Son. My brothers to bring a warrant for my death!
How strange this shows!
3rd Off. There's no delaying time.
Y. Son. Desire 'em hither: call 'em up — my brothers!
They shall deny it to your faces.
1st Off. My lord,
They're far enough by this; at least at court;
And this most strict command they left behind 'em.
When grief swam in their eyes, they showed like brothers,
Brimful of heavy sorrow — but the duke
"Must have his pleasure."
Y. Son. His pleasure!
1st Off. These were the last words, which my memory bears,
"Commend us to the scaffold in our tears."
Y. Son. Pox dry their tears! what should I do with tears?
I hate 'em worse than any citizen's son

Can hate salt water. Here came a letter now,
New-bleeding from their pens, scarce stinted yet:
Would I'd been torn in pieces when I tore it:
Look, you officious whoresons, words of comfort,
"Not long a prisoner."

1st Off. It says true in that, sir; for you must suffer presently.

Y. Son. A villainous Duns[n] upon the letter, knavish exposition!

Look you then here, sir: "we'll get thee out by a trick," says he.

2nd Off. That may hold too, sir; for you know a trick is commonly four cards,[n] which was meant by us four officers.

Y. Son. Worse and worse dealing.

1st Off. The hour beckons us.
The headsman waits: lift up your eyes to Heaven.

Y. Son. I thank you, faith; good pretty wholesome counsel!
I should look up to Heaven, as you said,
Whilst he behind me cozens me of my head.
Aye, that's the trick.

3rd Off. You delay too long, my lord.

Y. Son. Stay, good authority's bastards;[n] since I must,
Through brothers' perjury, die, O, let me venom
Their souls with curses.

3rd Off. Come, 'tis no time to curse.

Y. Son. Must I bleed then without respect of sign? well —
My fault was sweet sport which the world approves,
I die for that which every woman loves. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

A Lodge in the Ducal Grounds

Enter VENDICE, *disguised, and* HIPPOLITO

Ven. O, sweet, delectable, rare, happy, ravishing!
Hip. Why, what's the matter, brother?
Ven. O, 'tis able to make a man spring up and knock his forehead
Against yon silver ceiling.
Hip. Prithee, tell me;
Why may not I partake with you? you vowed once
To give me share to every tragic thought.
Ven. By the mass, I think I did too;
Then I'll divide it to thee.[n] The old duke,
Thinking my outward shape and inward heart
Are cut out of one piece (for he that prates his secrets,
His heart stands o' the outside), hires me by price
To greet him with a lady
In some fit place, veiled from the eyes o' the court,
Some darkened, blushless angle, that is guilty
Of his forefather's lust and great folks' riots;
To which I easily (to maintain my shape)
Consented, and did wish his impudent grace
To meet her here in this unsunnèd lodge,
Wherein 'tis night at noon; and here the rather
Because, unto the torturing of his soul,
The bastard and the duchess have appointed
Their meeting too in this luxurious circle;
Which most afflicting sight will kill his eyes,
Before we kill the rest of him.
Hip. 'Twill, i' faith! Most dreadfully digested!
I see not how you could have missed me, brother.
Ven. True; but the violence of my joy forgot it.
Hip. Aye, but where's that lady now?
Ven. O! at that word

I'm lost again; you cannot find me yet:
I'm in a throng of happy apprehensions.
He's suited for a lady; I have took care
For a delicious lip, a sparkling eye —
You shall be witness, brother:
Be ready; stand with your hat off. [*Exit.*

Hip. Troth, I wonder what lady it should be!
Yet 'tis no wonder, now I think again,
To have a lady stoop to a duke, that stoops unto his men.
'Tis common to be common through the world:
And there's more private common shadowing vices,
Than those who are known both by their names and prices.[n]
'Tis part of my allegiance to stand bare
To the duke's concubine; and here she comes.

Re-enter VENDICE, *with the skull of his* Betrothed *dressed up in tires*

Ven. Madam, his grace will not be absent long.
Secret! ne'er doubt us, madam; 'twill be worth
Three velvet gowns to your ladyship. Known![n]
Few ladies respect that disgrace: a poor thin shell!
'Tis the best grace you have to do it well.
I'll save your hand that labour:[n] I'll unmask you!

Hip. Why, brother, brother!

Ven. Art thou beguiled now? tut, a lady can,
As such all hid,[n] beguile a wiser man.
Have I not fitted the old surfeiter
With a quaint piece of beauty? Age and bare bone
Are e'er allied in action. Here's an eye,
Able to tempt a great man — to serve God:
A pretty hanging lip, that has forgot now to dissemble.
Methinks this mouth should make a swearer tremble;
A drunkard clasp his teeth, and not undo 'em,
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em.
Here's a cheek keeps her colour, let the wind go whistle:

Spout, rain, we fear thee not: be hot or cold,
All's one with us; and is not he absurd,
Whose fortunes are upon their faces set,
That fear no other god but wind and wet?
Hip. Brother, you've spoke that right:
Is this the form that, living, shone so bright?
Ven. The very same.
And now methinks I could e'en chide myself
For doting on her beauty, though her death
Shall be revenged after no common action.
Does the silkworm expend her yellow labours
For thee? For thee does she undo herself?
Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships,
For the poor benefit of a bewildering minute?
Why does yon fellow falsify highways,[n]
And put his life between the judge's lips,
To refine such a thing — keeps horse and men
To beat their valours for her?
Surely we are all mad people, and they
Whom we think are, are not: we mistake those;
'Tis we are mad in sense, they but in clothes.
Hip. Faith, and in clothes too we, give us our due.
Ven. Does every proud and self-affecting dame
Camphire her face for this, and grieve her Maker
In sinful baths of milk, when many an infant starves
For her superfluous outside — all for this?
Who now bids twenty pounds a night? prepares
Music, perfumes, and sweetmeats? All are hushed.
Thou may'st lie chaste now! it were fine, methinks,
To have thee seen at revels, forgetful feasts,
And unclean brothels! sure, 'twould fright the sinner,
And make him a good coward: put a reveller
Out of his antic amble,
And cloy an epicure with empty dishes.
Here might a scornful and ambitious woman
Look through and through herself. See, ladies, with false
forms

You deceive men, but cannot deceive worms. —
Now to my tragic business. Look you, brother,
I have not fashioned this only for show
And useless property;[n] no, it shall bear a part
E'en in its own revenge. This very skull,
Whose mistress the duke poisoned, with this drug,
The mortal curse of the earth, shall be revenged
In the like strain, and kiss his lips to death.
As much as the dumb thing can, he shall feel:
What fails in poison, we'll supply in steel.

Hip. Brother, I do applaud thy constant vengeance —
The quaintness of thy malice — above thought.

Ven. So, 'tis laid on [*He poisons the lips of the skull*]: now come and welcome, duke,
I have her for thee. I protest it, brother,
Methinks she makes almost as fair a fine,
As some old gentlewoman in a periwig.
Hide thy face now for shame; thou hadst need have a mask now:
'Tis vain when beauty flows;[n] but when it fleets,
This would become graves better than the streets.

Hip. You have my voice[n] in that: hark, the duke's come.

Ven. Peace, let's observe what company he brings,
And how he does absent 'em; for you know
He'll wish all private. Brother, fall you back a little
With the bony lady.

Hip. That I will. [*Retires.*

Ven. So, so; now nine years' vengeance crowd into a minute!

Enter Duke *and* Gentlemen

Duke. You shall have leave to leave us, with this charge
Upon your lives, if we be missed by the duchess
Or any of the nobles, to give out,
We're privately rid forth.

Ven. O happiness!

Duke. With some few honourable gentlemen, you may say —

You may name those that are away from court.

Gen. Your will and pleasure shall be done, my lord.

[*Exeunt* Gentlemen.

Ven. "Privately rid forth!"

He strives to make sure work on't. — Your good grace!

[*Advances.*

Duke. Piato, well done, hast brought her! what lady is't?

Ven. Faith, my lord, a country lady, a little bashful at first, as most of them are; but after the first kiss, my lord, the worst is past with them. Your grace knows now what you have to do; she has somewhat a grave look with her — but —

Duke. I love that best; conduct her.[n]

Ven. [*Aside.*] Have at all.

Duke. In gravest looks the greatest faults seem less.

Give me that sin that's robed in holiness.

Ven. [*Aside.*] Back with the torch! brother, raise the perfumes.

Duke. How sweet can a duke breathe! Age has no fault.

Pleasure should meet in a perfumèd mist.

Lady, sweetly encountered: I came from court,

I must be bold with you. O, what's this? O!

Ven. Royal villain! white devil!

Duke. O!

Ven. Brother, place the torch here, that his affrighted eyeballs

May start into those hollows. Duke, dost know

Yon dreadful vizard? View it well; 'tis the skull

Of Gloriana, whom thou poisonedst last.

Duke. O! 't has poisoned me!

Ven. Didst not know that till now?

Duke. What are you two?

Ven. Villains all three! the very ragged bone
Has been sufficiently revenged.
Duke. O, Hippolito, call treason! [*He sinks down.*
Hip. Yes, my lord; treason! treason! treason!
[*Stamping on him.*
Duke. Then I'm betrayed.
Ven. Alas! poor lecher: in the hands of knaves,
A slavish duke is baser than his slaves.
Duke. My teeth are eaten out.
Ven. Hadst any left?
Hip. I think but few.
Ven. Then those that did eat are eaten.
Duke. O my tongue!
Ven. Your tongue? 'twill teach you to kiss closer,
Not like a slobbering Dutchman. You have eyes still:
Look, monster, what a lady hast thou made me
[*Discovers himself.*
My once betrothèd wife.
Duke. Is it thou, villain? nay, then —
Ven. 'Tis I, 'tis Vendice, 'tis I.
Hip. And let this comfort thee: our lord and father
Fell sick upon the infection of thy frowns,
And died in sadness: be that thy hope of life.
Duke. O!
Ven. He had his tongue, yet grief made him die speechless.
Pooh! 'tis but early yet; now I'll begin
To stick thy soul with ulcers. I will make
Thy spirit grievous sore; it shall not rest,
But like some pestilent man toss in thy breast. Mark me, duke:
Thou art a renownèd, high and mighty cuckold.
Duke. O!
Ven. Thy bastard, thy bastard rides a-hunting in thy brow.
Duke. Millions of deaths!
Ven. Nay, to afflict thee more,

Here in this lodge they meet for damnèd clips.
Those eyes shall see the incest of their lips.
Duke. Is there a hell besides this, villains?
Ven. Villain!
Nay, Heaven is just; scorns are the hire of scorns:
I ne'er knew yet adulterer without horns.
Hip. Once, ere they die, 'tis quitted.[n]
Ven. Hark! the music:
Their banquet is prepared, they're coming —
Duke. O, kill me not with that sight!
Ven. Thou shalt not lose that sight for all thy dukedom.
Duke. Traitors! murderers!
Ven. What! is not thy tongue eaten out yet?
Then we'll invent a silence. Brother, stifle the torch.
Duke. Treason! murder!
Ven. Nay, faith, we'll have you hushed. Now with thy dagger
Nail down his tongue, and mine shall keep possession
About his heart; if he but gasp, he dies;
We dread not death to quittance injuries.
Brother, if he but wink, not brooking the foul object,
Let our two other hands tear up his lids,
And make his eyes like comets shine through blood.
When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good.
Hip. Whist, brother! the music's at our ear; they come.

Enter SPURIO, *meeting the* Duchess

Spu. Had not that kiss a taste of sin, 'twere sweet.
Duch. Why, there's no pleasure sweet, but it is sinful.
Spu. True, such a bitter sweetness fate hath given;
Best side to us is the worst side to Heaven.
Duch. Pish! come: 'tis the old duke, thy doubtful father:
The thought of him rubs Heaven in thy way.

But I protest by yonder waxen fire,
Forget him, or I'll poison him.
Spu. Madam, you urge a thought which ne'er had life.
So deadly do I loathe him for my birth,
That if he took me hasped within his bed,
I would add murder to adultery,
And with my sword give up his years to death.
Duch. Why, now thou'rt sociable; lets in and feast:
Loud'st music sound; pleasure is banquet's guest.
[*Exeunt* Duchess *and* SPURIO.
Duke. I cannot brook — [*Dies.*
Ven. The brook is turned to blood.
Hip. Thanks to loud music.
Ven. 'Twas our friend, indeed.
'Tis state in music for a duke to bleed.[n]
The dukedom wants a head, though yet unknown;
As fast as they peep up, let's cut 'em down. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

A Room in the Palace

Enter AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO

Amb. Was not his execution rarely plotted?
We are the duke's sons now.
Sup. Aye, you may thank my policy for that.
Amb. Your policy for what?
Sup. Why, was't not my invention, brother,
To slip the judges? and in lesser compass
Did I not draw the model of his death;
Advising you to sudden officers
And e'en extemporal execution?
Amb. Heart! 'twas a thing I thought on too.
Sup. You thought on't too! 'sfoot, slander not your thoughts
With glorious untruth; I know 'twas from you.

Amb. Sir, I say, 'twas in my head.
Sup. Aye, like your brains then,
Ne'er to come out as long as you lived.
Amb. You'd have the honour on't, forsooth, that your wit
Led him to the scaffold.
Sup. Since it is my due,
I'll publish't, but I'll ha't in spite of you.
Amb. Methinks, y'are much too bold; you should a little
Remember us, brother, next to be honest duke.
Sup. [*Aside.*] Aye, it shall be as easy for you to be duke
As to be honest; and that's never, i' faith.
Amb. Well, cold he is by this time; and because
We're both ambitious, be it our amity,
And let the glory be shared equally.
Sup. I am content to that.
Amb. This night our younger brother shall out of prison:
I have a trick.
Sup. A trick! prithee, what is't?
Amb. We'll get him out by a wile.
Sup. Prithee, what wile?
Amb. No, sir; you shall not know it, till it be done;
For then you'd swear 'twere yours.

Enter an Officer

Sup. How now, what's he?
Amb. One of the officers.
Sup. Desirèd news.
Amb. How now, my friend?
Off. My lords, under your pardon, I am allotted
To that desertless office, to present you
With the yet bleeding head —
Sup. Ha, ha! excellent.
Amb. All's sure our own: brother, canst weep, *think'st* thou?

'Twould grace our flattery much; think of some dame;
'Twill teach thee to dissemble.
Sup. I have thought; — now for yourself.
Amb. Our sorrows are so fluent,
Our eyes o'erflow our tongues; words spoke in tears
Are like the murmurs of the waters — the sound
Is loudly heard, but cannot be distinguished.
Sup. How died he, pray?
Off. O, full of rage and spleen.
Sup. He died most valiantly, then; we're glad to hear it.
Off. We could not woo him once to pray.
Amb. He showed himself a gentleman in that:
Give him his due.
Off. But, in the stead of prayer,
He drew forth oaths.
Sup. Then did he pray, dear heart,
Although you understood him not?
Off. My lords,
E'en at his last, with pardon be it spoke,
He cursed you both.
Sup. He cursed us? 'las, good soul!
Amb. [*Aside.*] It was not in our powers, but the duke's pleasure.
Finely dissembled a both sides, sweet fate;
O happy opportunity!

Enter LUSSURIOSO

Lus. Now, my lords.
Amb. and Sup. O! —
Lus. Why do you shun me, brothers?
You may come nearer now:
The savour of the prison has forsook me.
I thank such kind lords as yourselves, I'm free.
Amb. Alive!
Sup. *In health!*

Amb. Released!
We were both e'en amazed with joy to see it.
Lus. I am much to thank to you.
Sup. Faith, we spared no tongue unto my lord the duke.
Amb. I know your delivery, brother,
Had not been half so sudden but for us.
Sup. O, how we pleaded!
Lus. Most deserving brothers!
In my best studies I will think of it. [*Exit.*
Amb. O death and vengeance!
Sup. Hell and torments!
Amb. Slave, cam'st thou to delude us?
Off. Delude you, my lords?
Sup. Aye, villain, where's his head now?
Off. Why here, my lord;
Just after his delivery, you both came
With warrant from the duke to behead your brother.
Amb. Aye, our brother, the duke's son.
Off. The duke's son, my lord, had his release before you came.
Amb. Whose head's that, then?
Off. His whom you left command for, your own brother's.
Amb. Our brother's? O furies!
Sup. Plagues!
Amb. Confusions!
Sup. Darkness!
Amb. Devils!
Sup. Fell it out so accursedly?
Amb. So damnedly?
Sup. Villain, I'll brain thee with it.
Off. O my good lord!
Sup. The devil overtake thee!
Amb. O fatal!
Sup. O prodigious to our bloods!
Amb. Did we dissemble?

Sup. Did we make our tears women for thee?
Amb. Laugh and rejoice for thee?
Sup. Bring warrant for thy death?
Amb. Mock off thy head?
Sup. You had a trick: you had a wile, forsooth.
Amb. A murrain meet 'em; there's none of these wiles that ever come to good: I see now, there's nothing sure in mortality, but mortality.
Well, no more words: shalt be revenged, i' faith.
Come, throw off clouds; now, brother, think of vengeance,
And deeper-settled hate; sirrah, sit fast,
We'll pull down all, but thou shalt down at last.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH

SCENE I

The Precincts of the Palace

Enter LUSSURIOSO *with* HIPPOLITO

Lus. Hippolito!
Hip. My lord,
Has your good lordship aught to command me in?
Lus. I prithee, leave us!
Hip. How's this? come and leave us!
Lus. Hippolito!
Hip. Your honour, I stand ready for any duteous employment.
Lus. Heart! what mak'st thou here?
Hip. A pretty lordly humour!
He bids me be present to depart; something
Has stung his honour.
Lus. Be nearer; draw nearer:
Ye're not so good, methinks; I'm angry with you.
Hip. With me, my lord? I'm angry with myself for't.
Lus. You did prefer a goodly fellow to me:
'Twas wittily elected; 'twas. I thought
He had been a villain, and he proves a knave —
To me a knave.
Hip. I chose him for the best, my lord:
'Tis much my sorrow, if neglect in him
Breed discontent in you.
Lus. Neglect! 'twas will. Judge of it.
Firmly to tell of an incredible act,

Not to be thought, less to be spoken of,
'Twixt my stepmother and the bastard; oh!
Incestuous sweets between 'em.
Hip. Fie, my lord!
Lus. I, in kind loyalty to my father's forehead,
Made this a desperate arm; and in that fury
Committed treason on the lawful bed,
And with my sword e'en rased my father's bosom,
For which I was within a stroke of death.[n]
Hip. Alack! I'm sorry. — [*Aside.*] 'Sfoot, just upon the stroke,
Jars in my brother; 'twill be villainous music.

Enter VENDICE, *disguised*

Ven. My honoured lord.
Lus. Away! prithee, forsake us: hereafter we'll not know thee.
Ven. Not know me, my lord! your lordship cannot choose.
Lus. Begone, I say: thou art a false knave.
Ven. Why, the easier to be known, my lord.
Lus. Pish! I shall prove too bitter, with a word
Make thee a perpetual prisoner,
And lay this iron age upon thee.[n]
Ven. [*Aside.*] Mum!
For there's a doom would make a woman dumb.
Missing the bastard — next him — the wind's come about:
Now 'tis my brother's turn to stay, mine to go out. [*Exit.*
Lus. He has greatly moved me.[n]
Hip. Much to blame, i' faith.
Lus. But I'll recover, to his ruin. 'Twas told me lately,
I know not whether falsely, that you'd a brother.
Hip. Who, I? yes, my good lord, I have a brother.
Lus. How chance the court ne'er saw him? of what *nature?*

How does he apply his hours?
Hip. Faith, to curse fates
Who, as he thinks, ordained him to be poor —
Keeps at home, full of want and discontent.
Lus. [*Aside.*] There's hope in him; for discontent and want
Is the best clay to mould a villain of. —
Hippolito, wish him repair to us:
If there be ought in him to please our blood,
For thy sake we'll advance him, and build fair
His meanest fortunes; for it is in us
To rear up towers from cottages.
Hip. It is so, my lord: he will attend your honour;
But he's a man in whom much melancholy dwells.
Lus. Why, the better; bring him to court.
Hip. With willingness and speed. —
[*Aside.*] Whom he cast off e'en now, must now succeed.
Brother, disguise must off;
In thine own shape now I'll prefer thee to him:
How strangely does himself work to undo him! [n] [*Exit.*
Lus. This fellow will come fitly; he shall kill
That other slave, that did abuse my spleen,
And made it swell to treason. I have put
Much of my heart into him; he must die.
He that knows great men's secrets, and proves slight,
That man ne'er lives to see his beard turn white.
Aye, he shall speed him: I'll employ the brother;
Slaves are but nails to drive out one another.
He being of black condition,[n] suitable
To want and ill-content, hope of preferment
Will grind him to an edge.

Enter Nobles

1*st Noble.* Good days unto your honour.
Lus. My kind lords, I do return the like.
2*nd Noble.* Saw you my lord the duke?

Lus. My lord and father! is he from court?
1st Noble. He's sure from court;
But where — which way his pleasure took, we know not,
Nor can we hear on't.
Lus. Here come those should tell.
Saw you my lord and father?
3rd Noble. Not since two hours before noon, my lord,
And then he privately rode forth.
Lus. O, he's rid forth.
1st Noble. 'Twas wondrous privately.
2nd Noble. There's none i' th' court had any knowledge on't.
Lus. His grace is old and sudden: 'tis no treason
To say the duke, my father, has a humour,
Or such a toy about him; what in us
Would appear light, in him seems virtuous.
3rd Noble. 'Tis oracle, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

An Apartment in the Palace

Enter VENDICE, *out of his disguise, and* HIPPOLITO

Hip. So, so, all's as it should be, y'are yourself.
Ven. How that great villain puts me to my shifts!
Hip. He that did lately in disguise reject thee,
Shall, now thou art thyself, as much respect thee.
Ven. 'Twill be the quainter fallacy.[n] But, brother,
'Sfoot, what use will he put me to now, think'st thou?
Hip. Nay, you must pardon me in that: I know not.
He has some employment for you: but what 'tis,
He and his secretary (the devil) know best.
Ven. Well, I must suit my tongue to his desires,
What colour soe'er they be; hoping at last
To pile up all my wishes on his breast.
Hip. Faith, brother, he himself shows the way.

Ven. Now the duke is dead, the realm is clad in clay.[n]
His death being not yet known, under his name
The people still are governed. Well, thou his son
Art not long-lived: thou shalt not joy his death.
To kill thee, then, I should most honour thee;
For 'twould stand firm in every man's belief,
Thou'st a kind child, and only died'st with grief.
Hip. You fetch about well; but let's talk in present.
How will you appear in fashion different,
As well as in apparel, to make all things possible?
If you be but once tripped, we fall for ever.
It is not the least policy to be doubtful;[n]
You must change tongue: familiar was your first.
Ven. Why, I'll bear me in some strain of melancholy,
And string myself with heavy-sounding wire,
Like such an instrument, that speaks merry things sadly.
Hip. Then 'tis as I meant;
I gave you out at first in discontent.
Ven. I'll tune myself, and then —
Hip. 'Sfoot, here he comes. Hast thought upon't?
Ven. Salute him; fear not me.

Enter LUSSURIOSO

Lus. Hippolito!
Hip. Your lordship —
Lus. What's he yonder?
Hip. 'Tis Vendice, my discontented brother,
Whom, 'cording to your will, I've brought to court.
Lus. Is that thy brother? Beshrew me, a good presence;
I wonder he has been from the court so long.
Come nearer.
Hip. Brother! Lord Lussurioso, the duke's son.
Lus. Be more near to us; welcome; nearer yet.
Ven. How don you? gi' you good den:[n]
[Takes off his hat and bows.

Lus. We thank thee.
How strangely such a coarse homely salute
Shows in the palace, where we greet in fire,
Nimble and desperate tongues! should we name
God in a salutation,[n] 'twould ne'er be stood on; — Heaven!
Tell me, what has made thee so melancholy?

Ven. Why, going to law.

Lus. Why, will that make a man melancholy?

Ven. Yes, to look long upon ink and black buckram.[n] I went me to law in *anno quadragesimo secundo*, and I waded out of it in *anno sexagesimo tertio*.

Lus. What, three-and-twenty years in law?

Ven. I have known those that have been five-and-fifty, and all about pullen and pigs.

Lus. May it be possible such men should breathe,
To vex the terms[n] so much?

Ven. 'Tis food to some, my lord. There are old men at the present, that are so poisoned with the affectation of law-words (having had many suits canvassed[n]), that their common talk is nothing but Barbary Latin. They cannot so much as pray but in law, that their sins may be removed with a writ of error, and their souls fetched up to Heaven with a sasarara.[n]

Lus. It seems most strange to me;
Yet all the world meets round in the same bent:
Where the heart's set, there goes the tongue's consent.
How dost apply thy studies, fellow?

Ven. Study? why, to think how a great rich man lies a-dying, and a poor cobbler tolls the bell for him. How he cannot depart the world, and see the great chest stand before him; when he lies speechless, how he will point you readily to all the boxes; and when he is past all memory, as the gossips guess, then thinks he of forfeitures and obligations; nay, when to all men's hearings he hurls and rattles in the throat, he's busy threatening *his poor tenants*. And this would last me now some seven

years' thinking, or thereabouts. But I have a conceit a-coming in picture upon this; I draw it myself, which, i' faith, la, I'll present to your honour; you shall not choose but like it, for your honour shall give me nothing for it.

Lus. Nay, you mistake me, then,
For I am published bountiful enough.
Let's taste of your conceit.

Ven. In picture, my Lord?

Lus. Aye, in picture.

Ven. Marry, this it is — "A usuring father to be boiling in hell, and his son and heir with a whore dancing over him."

Hip. [*Aside.*] He has pared him to the quick.

Lus. The conceit's pretty, i' faith;
But, take't upon my life, 'twill ne'er be liked.

Ven. No? why, I'm sure the whore will be liked well enough.

Hip. [*Aside.*] Aye, if she were out o' the picture, he'd like her then himself.

Ven. And as for the son and heir, he shall be an eyesore to no young revellers, for he shall be drawn in cloth-of-gold breeches.

Lus. And thou hast put my meaning in the pockets,
And canst not draw that out?[n] My thought was this:
To see the picture of a usuring father
Boiling in hell — our rich men would never like it.

Ven. O, true, I cry you heartily mercy,
I know the reason, for some of them had rather
Be damned in deed than damned in colours.[n]

Lus. [*Aside.*] A parlous melancholy! he has wit enough
To murder any man, and I'll give him means. —
I think thou art ill-moneyed?

Ven. Money! ho, ho!
'T has been my want so long, 'tis now my scoff:
I've e'en forgot what colour silver's of.

Lus. [*Aside.*] It hits as I could wish.

Ven. I get good clothes

Of those that dread my humour; and for table-room
I feed on those that cannot be rid of me.
Lus. Somewhat to set thee up withal.
[*Gives him money.*
Ven. O mine eyes!
Lus. How now, man?
Ven. Almost struck blind;
This bright unusual shine to me seems proud;
I dare not look till the sun be in a cloud.
Lus. I think I shall affect his melancholy,
How are they now?
Ven. The better for your asking.
Lus. You shall be better yet, if you but fasten
Truly on my intent. Now y'are both present,
I will unbrace such a close private villain
Unto your vengeful swords, the like ne'er heard of,
Who hath disgraced you much, and injured us.
Hip. Disgraced us, my lord?
Lus. Aye, Hippolito.
I kept it here till now, that both your angers
Might meet him at once.
Ven. I'm covetous
To know the villain.
Lus. You know him: that slave-pander,
Piato, whom we threatened last
With irons in perpetual 'prisonment.
Ven. [*Aside.*] All this is I.
Hip. Is't he, my lord?
Lus. I'll tell you; you first preferred him to me.
Ven. Did you, brother?
Hip. I did indeed.
Lus. And the ungrateful villain,
To quit that kindness, strongly wrought with me —
Being, as you see, a likely man for pleasure — [n]
With jewels to corrupt your virgin sister.
Hip. O villain!
Ven. He shall surely die that did it.

Lus. I, far from thinking any virgin harm,
Especially knowing her to be as chaste
As that part which scarce suffers to be touched —
The eye — would not endure him.
Ven. Would you not, my lord?
'Twas wondrous honourably done.
Lus. But with some fine frowns kept him out.
Ven. Out, slave![n]
Lus. What did me he, but in revenge of that,
Went of his own free will to make infirm
Your sister's honour (whom I honour with my soul
For chaste respect[n]) and not prevailing there
(As 'twas but desperate folly to attempt it),
In mere spleen, by the way, waylays your mother,
Whose honour being a coward as it seems,
Yielded by little force.
Ven. Coward indeed!
Lus. He, proud of this advantage (as he thought),
Brought me this news for happy. But I, Heaven forgive me for't! —
Ven. What did your honour?
Lus. In rage pushed him from me,
Trampled beneath his throat, spurned him, and bruised:
Indeed I was too cruel, to say troth.
Hip. Most nobly managed!
Ven. [*Aside.*] Has not Heaven an ear? is all the lightning wasted?
Lus. If I now were so impatient in a modest cause,
What should you be?
Ven. Full mad: he shall not live
To see the moon change.
Lus. He's about the palace;
Hippolito, entice him this way, that thy brother
May take full mark of him.
Hip. Heart! that shall not need, my lord:
I can direct him so far.

Lus. Yet for my hate's sake,
Go, wind him this way. I'll see him bleed myself.
Hip. [*Aside.*] What now, brother?
Ven. [*Aside.*] Nay, e'en what you will — y'are put to't, brother.
Hip. [*Aside.*] An impossible task, I'll swear,
To bring him hither, that's already here. [*Exit.*
Lus. Thy name? I have forgot it.
Ven. Vendice, my lord.
Lus. 'Tis a good name that.
Ven. Aye, a revenger.
Lus. It does betoken courage; thou shouldst be valiant,
And kill thine enemies.
Ven. That's my hope, my lord.
Lus. This slave is one.
Ven. I'll doom him.
Lus. Then I'll praise thee.
Do thou observe me best, and I'll best raise thee.

Re-enter HIPPOLITO

Ven. Indeed, I thank you.
Lus. Now, Hippolito, where's the slave-pander?
Hip. Your good lordship
Would have a loathsome sight of him, much offensive.
He's not in case now to be seen, my lord.
The worst of all the deadly sins is in him —
That beggarly damnation, drunkenness.
Lus. Then he's a double slave.
Ven. [*Aside.*] 'Twas well conveyed upon a sudden wit.
Lus. What, are you both
Firmly resolved? I'll see him dead myself.
Ven. Or else let not us live.
Lus. You may direct your brother to take note of him.
Hip. I shall.
Lus. *Rise but in* this, and you shall never fall.

Ven. Your honour's vassals.
Lus. [*Aside.*] This was wisely carri
Deep policy in us makes fools of such:
Then must a slave die, when he knows too much. [*E*
Ven. O thou almighty patience! 'tis my wonder
That such a fellow, impudent and wicked,
Should not be cloven as he stood;
Or with a secret wind burst open!
Is there no thunder left: or is't kept up
In stock for heavier vengeance? [*Thunder*] there it go
Hip. Brother, we lose ourselves.
Ven. But I have found it
'Twill hold, 'tis sure; thanks, thanks to any spirit,
That mingled it 'mongst my inventions.
Hip. What is't?
Ven. 'Tis sound and good; thou shalt partake it;
I'm hired to kill myself.
Hip. True.
Ven. Prithee, mark it;
And the old duke being dead, but not conveyed,[n]
For he's already missed too, and you know
Murder will peep out of the closest husk —
Hip. Most true.
Ven. What say you then to this device
If we dressed up the body of the duke?
Hip. In that disguise of yours?
Ven. Y'are quick, y' have reached it.
Hip. I like it wondrous
Ven. And being in drink, as you have published him
To lean him on his elbow, as if sleep had caught him
Which claims most interest in such sluggy men?
Hip. Good yet; but here's a doubt;
We, thought by the duke's son to kill that pander,
Shall, when he is known, be thought to kill the duke.
Ven. Neither, O thanks! it is substantial:[n]
For that disguise being on him which I wore,
It will be thought I, which he calls the pander, did

the duke, and fled away in his apparel, leaving him so disguised to avoid swift pursuit.

Hip. Firmer and firmer.

Ven. Nay, doubt not, 'tis in grain:[n] I warrant it holds colour.

Hip. Let's about it.

Ven. By the way, too, now I think on't, brother, 240
Let's conjure that base devil out of our mother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

A Corridor in the Palace

Enter the Duchess, *arm in arm with* SPURIO, *looking lasciviously on her. After them, enter* SUPERVACUO, *with a rapier, running;* AMBITIOSO *stops him*

Spu. Madam, unlock yourself;
Should it be seen, your arm would be suspected.

Duch. Who is't that dares suspect or this or these?
May not we deal our favours where we please?

Spu. I'm confident you may.[n]
[*Exeunt* Duchess *and* SPURIO.

Amb. 'Sfoot, brother, hold.

Sup. Wouldst let the bastard shame us?

Amb. Hold, hold, brother! there's fitter time than now.

Sup. Now, when I see it!

Amb. 'Tis too much seen already.

Sup. Seen and known;
The nobler she's, the baser is she grown. 10

Amb. If she were bent lasciviously (the fault
Of mighty women, that sleep soft[n]) — O death!
Must she needs choose such an unequal sinner,
To make all worse? —

Sup. A bastard! the duke's bastard! shame heaped *on shame!*

Amb. O our disgrace!
Most women have small waists the world throughout;
But their desires are thousand miles about.
Sup. Come, stay not here, let's after, and prevent,
Or else they'll sin faster than we'll repent. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

A Room in GRATIANA'S *House*

Enter VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO, *bringing out* GRATIANA *by the shoulders, and with daggers in their hands*

Ven. O thou, for whom no name is bad enough!
Gra. What mean my sons? what, will you murder me?
Ven. Wicked, unnatural parent!
Hip. Fiend of women!
Gra. O! are sons turned monsters? help!
Ven. In vain.
Gra. Are you so barbarous to set iron nipples [n]
Upon the breast that gave you suck?
Ven. That breast
Is turned to quarlèd poison.[n]
Gra. Cut not your days for't! [n] am not I your mother?
Ven. Thou dost usurp that title now by fraud,
For in that shell of mother breeds a bawd.
Gra. A bawd! O name far loathsomer than hell!
Hip. It should be so, knew'st thou thy office well.
Gra. I hate it.
Ven. Ah! is't possible? thou only? [n] Powers on high,
That women should dissemble when they die!
Gra. Dissemble!
Ven. Did not the duke's son direct
A fellow of the world's condition hither,
That did corrupt all that was good in thee?
Made thee uncivilly forget thyself,
And work our sister to his lust?

Gra. Who, I?
That had been monstrous. I defy that man
For any such intent! none lives so pure,
But shall be soiled with slander. Good son, believe it not.
Ven. [*Aside.*] O, I'm in doubt,
Whether I am myself, or no —
Stay, let me look again upon this face.
Who shall be saved, when mothers have no grace?
Hip. 'Twould make one half despair.
Ven. I was the man.
Defy me now; let's see, do't modestly.
Gra. O hell unto my soul!
Ven. In that disguise, I, sent from the duke's son,
Tried you, and found you base metal,
As any villain might have done.
Gra. O, no,
No tongue but yours could have bewitched me so.
Ven. O nimble in damnation, quick in tune!
There is no devil could strike fire so soon:
I am confuted in a word.
Gra. O sons, forgive me! to myself I'll prove more true;
You that should honour me, I kneel to you.
[*Kneels and weeps.*
Ven. A mother to give aim to her own daughter!
Hip. True, brother; how far beyond nature 'tis.
Ven. Nay, an you draw tears once, go you to bed;
We will make iron blush and change to red.
Brother, it rains. 'Twill spoil your dagger: house it.
Hip. 'Tis done.
Ven. I' faith, 'tis a sweet shower, it does much good.
The fruitful grounds and meadows of her soul
Have been long dry: pour down, thou blessèd dew!
Rise, mother; troth, this shower has made you higher!
Gra. O you Heavens! take this infectious spot out of my soul,
I'll rinse it in seven waters of mine eyes!

Make my tears salt enough to taste of grace.
To weep is to our sex naturally given:
But to weep truly, that's a gift from Heaven.
Ven. Nay, I'll kiss you now. Kiss her, brother:
Let's marry her to our souls, wherein's no lust,
And honourably love her.
Hip. Let it be.
Ven. For honest women are so seld and rare,
'Tis good to cherish those poor few that are.
O you of easy wax! [n] do but imagine
Now the disease has left you, how leprously
That office would have clinged unto your forehead!
All mothers that had any graceful hue
Would have worn masks to hide their face at you:
It would have grown to this — at your foul name,
Green-coloured maids [n] would have turned red with shame.
Hip. And then our sister, full of hire and baseness —
Ven. There had been boiling lead again,
The duke's son's great concubine!
A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her soul trail i' the dirt!
Hip. Great, to be miserably great; rich, to be eternally wretched.
Ven. O common madness!
Ask but the thrivingest harlot in cold blood,
She'd give the world to make her honour good.
Perhaps you'll say, but only to the duke's son
In private; why she first begins with one,
Who afterward to thousands prove a whore:
"Break ice in one place, it will crack in more."
Gra. Most certainly applied!
Hip. O brother, you forget our business.
Ven. And well remembered; joy's a subtle elf, [n]
I think man's happiest when he forgets himself.
Farewell, once dry, now holy-watered mead; [n]
Our hearts wear feathers, that before wore lead.

Gra. I'll give you this — that one I never knew
Plead better for and 'gainst the devil than you.
Ven. You make me proud on't.
Hip. Commend us in all virtue to our sister.
Ven. Aye, for the love of Heaven, to that true maid.
Gra. With my best words.
Ven. Why, that was motherly said.
[*Exeunt* VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO.
Gra. I wonder now, what fury did transport me!
I feel good thoughts begin to settle in me.
O, with what forehead can I look on her,
Whose honour I've so impiously beset?
And here she comes —

Enter CASTIZA

Cas. Now, mother, you have wrought with me so strongly,
That what for my advancement, as to calm
The trouble of your tongue, I am content.
Gra. Content, to what?
Cas. To do as you have wished me;
To prostitute my breast to the duke's son;
And put myself to common usury.
Gra. I hope you will not so!
Cas. Hope you I will not?
That's not the hope you look to be saved in.
Gra. Truth, but it is.
Cas. Do not deceive yourself;
I am as you, e'en out of marble wrought.
What would you now? are ye not pleased yet with me?
You shall not wish me to be more lascivious
Than I intend to be.
Gra. Strike not me cold.
Cas. How often have you charged me on your blessing
To be a cursèd woman? When you knew
Your blessing had no force to make me lewd,

You laid your curse upon me; that did more,
The mother's curse is heavy; where that fights,
Suns set in storm, and daughters lose their lights.
Gra. Good child, dear maid, if there be any spark
Of heavenly intellectual fire within thee,
O, let my breath revive it to a flame!
Put not all out with woman's wilful follies.
I am recovered of that foul disease,
That haunts too many mothers; kind, forgive me.
Make me not sick in health! If then
My words prevailed, when they were wickedness,
How much more now, when they are just and good?
Cas. I wonder what you mean! are not you she,
For whose infect persuasions I could scarce
Kneel out my prayers, and had much ado
In three hours' reading to untwist so much
Of the black serpent as you wound about me?
Gra. 'Tis unfruitful, child, and tedious to repeat
What's past; I'm now your present mother.
Cas. Tush! now 'tis too late.
Gra. Bethink again: thou know'st not what thou say'st.
Cas. No! deny advancement? treasure? the duke's son?
Gra. O, see! I spoke those words, and now they poison me!
What will the deed do then?
Advancement? true; as high as shame can pitch!
For treasure; who e'er knew a harlot rich?
Or could build by the purchase of her sin
An hospital to keep her bastards in?
The duke's son! O, when women are young courtiers
They are sure to be old beggars;
To know the miseries most harlots taste,
Thou'dst wish thyself unborn, when thou art unchaste.
Cas. O mother, let me twine about your neck,
And kiss you, till my soul melt on your lips!
I did but this to try you.

Gra. O, speak truth!
Cas. Indeed I did but; for no tongue has force
To alter me from honest.
If maidens would, men's words could have no power;
A virgin's honour is a crystal tower
Which (being weak) is guarded with good spirits;
Until she basely yields, no ill inherits.
Gra. O happy child! faith, and thy birth hath saved me.
'Mong thousand daughters, happiest of all others:
Be thou a glass for maids, and I for mothers. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH

SCENE I

A Room in the Lodge. The DUKE'S *corpse, dressed in* VENDICE'S *disguise, lying on a couch*

Enter VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO

Ven. So, so, he leans well; take heed you wake him not, brother.

Hip. I warrant you my life for yours.

Ven. That's a good lay, for I must kill myself. Brother, that's I, that sits for me: do you mark it? And I must stand ready here to make away myself yonder. I must sit to be killed, and stand to kill myself. I could vary it not so little as thrice over again; 't has some eight returns, like Michaelmas term.

Hip. That's enow, o' conscience.

Ven. But, sirrah, does the duke's son come single?

Hip. No; there's the hell on't: his faith's too feeble to go alone. He brings flesh-flies after him, that will buzz against supper-time, and hum for his coming out.

Ven. Ah, the fly-flap of vengeance beat 'em to pieces! Here was the sweetest occasion, the fittest hour, to have made my revenge familiar with him; show him the body of the duke his father, and how quaintly he died, like a politician, in hugger-mugger, made no man acquainted with it; and in catastrophe slay him over his father's breast. O, I'm mad to lose such a sweet opportunity!

Hip. Nay, tush! prithee, be content! there's no remedy present; may not hereafter times open in as fair *faces as this?*

Ven. They may, if they can paint so well.

Hip. Come now: to avoid all suspicion, let's forsake this room, and be going to meet the duke's son.

Ven. Content: I'm for any weather. Heart! step close: here he comes.

Enter LUSSURIOSO

Hip. My honoured lord!

Lus. O me! you both present?

Ven. E'en newly, my lord, just as your lordship entered now: about this place we had notice given he should be, but in some loathsome plight or other.

Hip. Came your honour private?

Lus. Private enough for this; only a few
Attend my coming out.

Hip. [*Aside.*] Death rot those few!

Lus. Stay, yonder's the slave.

Ven. [*Aside.*] Mass, there's the slave, indeed, my lord. 'Tis a good child: he calls his father a slave!

Lus. Aye, that's the villain, the damned villain.
Softly. Tread easy.

Ven. Pah! I warrant you, my lord, we'll stifle-in our breaths.

Lus. That will do well:
Base rogue, thou sleepest thy last; 'tis policy
To have him killed in's sleep; for if he waked,
He would betray all to them.

Ven. But, my lord —

Lus. Ha, what say'st?

Ven. Shall we kill him now he's drunk?

Lus. Aye, best of all.

Ven. Why, then he will ne'er live to be sober.

Lus. No matter, let him reel to hell.

Ven. But being so full of liquor, I fear he will put out all the fire.

Lus. Thou art a mad beast.

Ven. And leave none to warm your lordship's golls withal; for he that dies drunk falls into hell-fire like a bucket of water — qush, qush!

Lus. Come, be ready: nake your swords: think of your wrongs; this slave has injured you.

Ven. Troth, so he has, and he has paid well for't.

Lus. Meet with him now.

Ven. You'll bear us out, my lord?

Lus. Pooh! am I a lord for nothing, think you? quickly now!

Ven. Sa, sa, sa,[n] thump [*Stabs the* Duke's *corpse*] — there he lies.

Lus. Nimbly done. — Ha! O villains! murderers! 'Tis the old duke, my father.

Ven. That's a jest.

Lus. What stiff and cold already!
O, pardon me to call you from your names:
'Tis none of your deed. That villain Piato,
Whom you thought now to kill, has murdered
And left him thus disguised.

Hip. And not unlikely.

Ven. O rascal! was he not ashamed
To put the duke into a greasy doublet?

Lus. He has been stiff and cold — who knows how long?

Ven. [*Aside.*] Marry, that I do.

Lus. No words, I pray, of anything intended.

Ven. O my lord!

Hip. I would fain have your lordship think that we have small reason to prate.

Lus. Faith, thou say'st true; I'll forthwith send to court
For all the nobles, bastard, duchess; tell,
How here by miracle we found him dead,
And in his raiment that foul villain fled.

Ven. That will be the best way, my lord,
To clear us all; let's cast about to be clear.

Lus. *Ho!* Nencio, Sordido, and the rest!

Enter all of them

1*st Ser.* My lord!
2*nd Ser.* My lord!
Lus. Be witnesses of a strange spectacle.
Choosing for private conference that sad room,
We found the duke my father gealed in blood.
1*st Ser.* My lord the duke! run, hie thee, Nencio.
Startle the court by signifying so much.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Thus much by wit a deep revenger can,
When murder's known, to be the clearest man.[n]
We're farthest off, and with as bold an eye
Survey his body as the standers-by.
Lus. My royal father, too basely let blood
By a malevolent slave!
Hip. [*Aside.*] Hark! he calls thee slave again.
Ven. [*Aside.*] He has lost: he may.
Lus. O sight! look hither, see, his lips are gnawn
With poison.
Ven. How! his lips? by the mass, they be.
O villain! O rogue! O slave! O rascal!
Hip. [*Aside.*] O good deceit! he quits him with like terms.
Amb. [*Within.*] Where?
Sup. [*Within.*] Which way?

Enter AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO, *with* Nobles *and* Gentlemen

Amb. Over what roof hangs this prodigious comet
In deadly fire? [n]
Lus. Behold, behold, my lords, the duke my father's murdered by a vassal that owes this habit, and here left disguised.

Enter DUCHESS *and* SPURIO

Duch. My lord and husband!
1st Noble. Reverend majesty!
2nd Noble. I have seen these clothes often attending on him.
Ven. [*Aside.*] That nobleman has been i' th' country, for He does not lie.
Sup. Learn of our mother; let's dissemble too:
I am glad he's vanished; so, I hope, are you.
Amb. Aye, you may take my word for't.
Spu. Old dad dead!
I, one of his cast sins, will send the Fates
Most hearty commendations by his own son;
I'll tug in the new stream, till strength be done.
Lus. Where be those two that did affirm to us,
My lord the duke was privately rid forth?
1st Gent. O, pardon us, my lords; he gave that charge —
Upon our lives, if he were missed at court,
To answer so; he rode not anywhere;
We left him private with that fellow here.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Confirmed.
Lus. O Heavens! that false charge was his death.
Impudent beggars! durst you to our face
Maintain such a false answer? Bear him straight
To execution.
1st Gent. My lord!
Lus. Urge me no more in this!
The excuse may be called half the murder.
Ven. [*Aside.*] You've sentenced well.
Lus. Away; see it be done.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Could you not stick? [n] See what confession doth!
Who would not lie, when men are hanged for truth?
Hip. [*Aside.*] Brother, how happy is our vengeance!

Ven. [*Aside.*] Why, it hits past the apprehension of
Indifferent wits.
Lus. My lord, let post-horses be sent
Into all places to entrap the villain.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Post-horses, ha, ha!
1st Noble. My lord, we're something bold to know our duty.
Your father's accidentally departed;
The titles that were due to him meet you.
Lus. [*Aside.*] Meet me! I'm not at leisure, my good lord.
I've many griefs to dispatch out o' the way.
Welcome, sweet titles! —
Talk to me, my lords,
Of sepulchres and mighty emperors' bones;
That's thought for me.
Ven. [*Aside.*] So one may see by this
How foreign markets go;
Courtiers have feet o' the nines, and tongues o' the twelves;
They flatter dukes, and dukes flatter themselves.
2nd Noble. My lord, it is your shine must comfort us.
Lus. Alas! I shine in tears, like the sun in April.
1st Noble. You're now my lord's grace.
Lus. My lord's grace! I perceive you'll have it so.
2nd Noble. 'Tis but your own.
Lus. Then, Heavens, give me grace to be so!
Ven. [*Aside.*] He prays well for himself.
1st Noble. Madam, all sorrows
Must run their circles into joys. No doubt but time
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
Ven. [*Aside.*] He were an ass then, i' faith.
1st Noble. In the mean season,
Let us bethink the latest funeral honours
Due to the duke's cold body. And withal,
Calling to memory our new happiness
Speed in his royal son: lords, gentlemen,
Prepare for revels.

Ven. [*Aside.*] Revels!

1*st Noble.* Time hath several falls.
Griefs lift up joys: feasts put down funerals.

Lus. Come then, my lords, my favour's to you all. —
[*Aside.*] The duchess is suspected foully bent;
I'll begin dukedom with her banishment.

[*Exeunt* LUSSURIOSO, Duchess, *and* Nobles.

Hip. Revels!

Ven. Aye, that's the word: we are firm yet;
Strike one strain more, and then we crown our wit.

[*Exeunt* VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO.

Spu. Well, have at the fairest mark — so said the duke when he begot me;
And if I miss his heart,[n] or near about,
Then have at any; a bastard scorns to be out. [*Exit.*

Sup. Notest thou that Spurio, brother?

Amb. Yes, I note him to our shame.

Sup. He shall not live: his hair shall not grow much longer. In this time of revels, tricks may be set afoot. Seest thou yon new moon? it shall outlive the new duke by much; this hand shall dispossess him. Then we're mighty.

A mask is treason's licence, that build upon:[n]
'Tis murder's best face, when a vizard's on. [*Exit.*

Amb. Is't so? 'tis very good!
And do you think to be duke then, kind brother?
I'll see fair play; drop one, and there lies t'other. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

A Room in PIERO'S *House*

Enter VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO, *with* PIERO *and other* Lords

Ven. My lords, be all of music, strike old griefs into *other* countries

That flow in too much milk,[n] and have faint livers,
Not daring to stab home their discontents.
Let our hid flames break out as fire, as lightning,
To blast this villainous dukedom, vexed with sin;
Wind up your souls to their full height again.
Piero. How?
1st Lord. Which way?
2nd Lord. Any way: our wrongs are such,
We cannot justly be revenged too much.
Ven. You shall have all enough. Revels are toward,
And those few nobles that have long suppressed you,
Are busied to the furnishing of a masque,
And do affect to make a pleasant tale on't:
The masquing suits are fashioning: now comes in
That which must glad us all. We too take pattern
Of all those suits, the colour, trimming, fashion,
E'en to an undistinguished hair almost:
Then entering first, observing the true form,
Within a strain or two we shall find leisure
To steal our swords out handsomely;
And when they think their pleasure sweet and good,
In midst of all their joys they shall sigh blood.
Piero. Weightily, effectually!
3rd Lord. Before the t'other maskers come —
Ven. We're gone, all done and past.
Piero. But how for the duke's guard?
Ven. Let that alone;
By one and one their strengths shall be drunk down.
Hip. There are five hundred gentlemen in the action,
That will apply themselves, and not stand idle.
Piero. O, let us hug your bosoms!
Ven. Come, my lords,
Prepare for deeds: let other times have words. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Hall of State in the Palace

In a dumb show, the possessing of the Young Duke *with all his* Nobles; *sounding music. A furnished table is brought forth; then enter the* Duke *and his* Nobles *to the banquet. A blazing star appeareth*

1st Noble. Many harmonious hours and choicest pleasures
Fill up the royal number of your years!
Lus. My lords, we're pleased to thank you, though we know
'Tis but your duty now to wish it so.
1st Noble. That shine [n] makes us all happy.
3rd Noble. His grace frowns.
2nd Noble. Yet we must say he smiles.
1st Noble. I think we must.
Lus. [*Aside.*] That foul incontinent duchess we have banished;
The bastard shall not live. After these revels,
I'll begin strange ones: he and the stepsons
Shall pay their lives for the first subsidies;
We must not frown so soon, else't had been now.
1st Noble. My gracious lord, please you prepare for pleasure.
The masque is not far off.
Lus. We are for pleasure.
Beshrew thee, what art thou? thou mad'st me start!
Thou hast committed treason. A blazing star!
1st Noble. A blazing star! O, where, my lord?
Lus. Spy out.
2nd Noble. See, see, my lords, a wondrous dreadful one!
Lus. I am not pleased at that ill-knotted fire,
That bushing, staring star. Am I not duke?

It should not quake me now. Had it appeared
Before, it I might then have justly feared;
But yet they say, whom art and learning weds,[n]
When stars wear locks,[n] they threaten great men's heads:
Is it so? you are read, my lords.
1st Noble. May it please your grace,
It shows great anger.
Lus. That does not please our grace.
2nd Noble. Yet here's the comfort, my lord: many times,
When it seems most near, it threatens farthest off.
Lus. Faith, and I think so too.
1st Noble. Beside, my lord,
You're gracefully established with the loves
Of all your subjects; and for natural death,
I hope it will be threescore years a-coming.
Lus. True? no more but threescore years?
1st Noble. Fourscore, I hope, my lord.
2nd Noble. And fivescore, I.
3rd Noble. But 'tis my hope, my lord, you shall ne'er die.
Lus. Give me thy hand; these others I rebuke:
He that hopes so is fittest for a duke:
Thou shalt sit next me; take your places, lords;
We're ready now for sports; let 'em set on:
You thing![n] we shall forget you quite anon!
3rd Noble. I hear 'em coming, my lord.

Enter the Masque of revengers: VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO, *with two* Lords

Lus. [*Aside.*] Ah, 'tis well!
Brothers and bastard, you dance next in hell!
[*They dance; at the end they steal out their swords, and kill the four seated at the table. Thunder.*
Ven. Mark, thunder!

Dost know thy cue, thou big-voiced crier?
Dukes' groans are thunder's watchwords.
Hip. So, my lords, you have enough.
Ven. Come, let's away, no lingering.
Hip. Follow! go! [*Exeunt except* VENDICE.
Ven. No power is angry when the lustful die;
When thunder claps, Heaven likes the tragedy. [*Exit.*
Lus. O, O!

Enter the Masque of intended murderers: AMBITIOSO, SUPERVACUO, SPURIO, *and a* Lord, *coming in dancing.* LUSSURIOSO *recovers a litlle in voice, groans, and calls,* "A guard! treason!" *at which the* Dancers *start out of their measure, and, turning towards the table, find them all to be murdered*

Spu. Whose groan was that?
Lus. Treason! a guard!
Amb. How now? all murdered!
Sup. Murdered!
3rd Lord. And those his nobles?
Amb. Here's a labour saved;
I thought to have sped him. 'Sblood, how came this?
Spu. Then I proclaim myself; now I am duke.
Amb. Thou duke! brother, thou liest.
Spu. Slave! so dost thou. [*Kills* AMBITIOSO.
3rd Lord. Base villain! hast thou slain my lord and master? [*Stabs* SPURIO.

Re-enter VENDICE *and* HIPPOLITO *and the two* Lords

Ven. Pistols! treason! murder! Help! guard my lord the duke!

Enter ANTONIO *and* Guard

Hip. Lay hold upon this traitor.
Lus. O!

Ven. Alas! the duke is murdered.
Hip. And the nobles.
Ven. [*Aside.*] Surgeons! surgeons! Heart! does he breathe so long?
Ant. A piteous tragedy! able to make
An old man's eyes bloodshot.
Lus. O!
Ven. [*Aside.*] Look to my lord the duke. A vengeance throttle him!
Confess, thou murderous and unhallowed man,
Didst thou kill all these?
3rd Lord. None but the bastard, I.
Ven. How came the duke slain, then?
3rd Lord. We found him so.
Lus. O villain!
Ven. Hark!
Lus. Those in the masque did murder us.
Ven. La you now, sir —
O marble impudence! will you confess now?
3rd Lord. 'Sblood, 'tis all false.
Ant. Away with that foul monster,
Dipped in a prince's blood.
3rd Lord. Heart! 'tis a lie.
Ant. Let him have bitter execution.
Ven. New marrow! no, I cannot be expressed.[n]
How fares my lord the duke?
Lus. Farewell to all;
He that climbs highest has the greatest fall.
My tongue is out of office.
Ven. Air, gentlemen, sir.
Now thou'lt not prate on't, 'twas Vendice murdered thee.
[*Whispers in his ear.*
Lus. O!
Ven. Murdered thy father. [*Whispers.*
Lus. O! [*Dies.*
Ven. *And I* am he — tell nobody: [Whispers] So, so, *the duke's* departed.

Ant. It was a deadly hand that wounded him.
The rest, ambitious who should rule and sway
After his death, were so made all away.
Ven. My lord was unlikely —
Hip. Now the hope
Of Italy lies in your reverend years.
Ven. Your hair will make the silver age again,
When there were fewer, but more honest men.
Ant. The burthen's weighty, and will press age down;
May I so rule, that Heaven may keep the crown!
Ven. The rape of your good lady has been quitted
With death on death.
Ant. Just is the law above.
But of all things it put me most to wonder
How the old duke came murdered!
Ven. O my lord!
Ant. It was the strangeliest carried: I've not heard of the like.
Hip. 'Twas all done for the best, my lord.
Ven. All for your grace's good. We may be bold to speak it now,
'Twas somewhat witty carried, though we say it —
'Twas we two murdered him.
Ant. You two?
Ven. None else, i' faith, my lord. Nay, 'twas well managed.
Ant. Lay hands upon those villains!
Ven. How! on us?
Ant. Bear 'em to speedy execution.
Ven. Heart! was't not for your good, my lord?
Ant. My good! Away with 'em: such an old man as he!
You, that would murder him, would murder me.
Ven. Is't come about?
Hip. 'Sfoot, brother, you begun.
Ven. May not we set as well as the duke's son?
Thou hast no conscience, are we not revenged?

Is there one enemy left alive amongst those?
'Tis time to die, when we're ourselves our foes:
When murderers shut deeds close, this curse does seal 'em:
If none disclose 'em, they themselves reveal 'em!
This murder might have slept in tongueless brass [n]
But for ourselves, and the world died an ass.
Now I remember too, here was Piato
Brought forth a knavish sentence once;
No doubt (said he), but time
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
'Tis well he died; he was a witch.
And now, my lord, since we are in for ever.
This work was ours, which else might have been slipped!
And if we list, we could have nobles clipped,[n]
And go for less than beggars; but we hate
To bleed so cowardly: we have enough,
I' faith, we're well, our mother turned, our sister true,
We die after a nest of dukes. Adieu! [*Exeunt.*

Ant. How subtlely was that murder closed!
Bear up
Those tragic bodies: 'tis a heavy season;
Pray Heaven their blood may wash away all treason!

[*Exit.*

NOTES

Figures in black type refer to pages; those in light face to lines.

THE WHITE DEVIL

28. Nec rhoncos, etc. Thou wilt fear neither the jibes of the malicious nor furnish wrapping paper for fish. Martial, iv. 87. That is, your writings will not be cast away for waste paper. — **Haec porcis**, etc. These things you will leave to-day for the pigs to eat.

31. Scene I. The scene is a street in Rome. — 16. **mummia.** Mummy, a substance like pitch sold by the apothecaries as a remedy for various diseases. See Sir Thomas Browne, *Urn Burial*, "Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharoah is sold for balsams."

32: 21. **called you master . . . caviare.** That once called you master, was once your property, only for a gift of caviare. Caviare was considered a great delicacy. — 23. **Wherein the phœnix . . . your throats.** Doubtless in allusion to the rare viands. The ancients roasted peacocks and other rare fowls; a phœnix would have been still rarer. — 25. **An idle meteor . . . the earth.** Meteors were thought by some to be exhaled from the earth.

33: 51. **Italian cut-works.** Open work made by stamping or cutting out. — Scene II. The scene is a room in Camillo's house.

34: 29. **brains perished with quicksilver . . . liver.** Quicksilver was supposed to be a much more powerful poison than it really is, even affecting those who worked with it. The liver was considered the seat of the affections. — 30. **The great barriers moulted not more feathers.** More feathers were not dislodged from the helmets of the knights in the great tilting-match. — 32. **An Irish gamester . . . naked.** Gamble for the clothes on his back. Barnaby Rich records a brotherhood of gamblers in Ireland "who would wager the clothing upon their backs rather than cease gaming." (Sampson).

35: 52. **an ass in's foot-cloth.** The foot-cloth was the rich *covering used on the* horses of the nobility. Camillo is merely an

ass in rich clothing. — 59. **a flaw.** A sudden violent gale, hence a quarrel. — 66. **That nobleman bowl booty?** At present Brachiano is letting Camillo have his own way with Vittoria, only to gain a foothold and bring his desires to later fruition. To play " booty " is to allow one's opponent to win in order to keep him in the game. — 66–68. **his cheek . . . my mistress.** *Bias* means inclination; *to jump* is to agree with, come in contact with. The bias of a ball was its weight out of centre so that it might roll in a curve. There may possibly be a play too on cheek and *chique*, a small ball or marble.

36: 77. **Stuffed with horn-shavings.** Because he is a cuckold and has horns. — 77. **God refuse me.** God refuse me entrance into heaven. — 82. **In leam.** In leash. This is a correction by Steevens of the original *leon* which was meaningless. — 93–95. **take the height . . . afore they are up.** To take the height is to erect a horoscope, thus making an astrological prediction before the event. — 95–97. **These politic inclosures . . . last jubilee.** " Provocative electuaries " are medicines supposed to arouse the passions. The passage may be paraphrased: The shutting up of wives who are suspected to be false causes " more rebellion in the flesh " than all the love potions the doctors have sold since last jubilee. The jubilee was the year 1600.

37: 119. **bill.** The European blackbird or chough has a yellow bill. — 125 ff. Passages within parentheses are asides to Vittoria.

38: 139. **glass-house.** This house stood near the theatre in Blackfriars. The site is still marked by Glass House Yard. — 143. **you are a goodly foil.** The foil was the setting for a jewel. — 153. **philosopher's stone.** The elixir, the property of which was to change base metals into gold.

39: 171. **quæ negata, grata.** Those things denied are pleasing. — 176. **at the end of the progress.** A long time hence. A progress was the journey of state of a sovereign through the kingdom; its occurrence was alike infrequent and uncertain. — 184. **I shall have you steal.** That is, you will be stealing. — 200. **curst dogs.** Dogs that are cross and treacherous, and for that reason are kept tied during the day.

40: 203. **Give credit.** Believe me, addressed to Vittoria; Brachiano has eyes for none other.

41: 237. **Chequered with cross sticks.** " Perhaps crosses *stuck in the grave.*" (Sampson).

43: 312. **That I may bear . . . stirrup.** That is, rise above my present low condition.

44: 322. **conspiring with a beard . . . graduate.** By means of a beard he was able to impress himself upon the university authorities.

45. Scene I. The scene is a room in Francisco's palace. — 12. **my wrongs.** Sins committed against me. — 14–16. **to try . . . spider.** The horn of the unicorn was considered an infallible antidote against poison. In order to test this power a circle was made of the powder made from the horn of the unicorn and a spider placed within it. The spider, so great was the power of this powder, would remain imprisoned. See Sir Thomas Browne, *Vulgar Errors*, III. 23. — 18. **an infected straying.** Wandering away after sinful pleasures.

46: 46. **fetch a course about.** Circle about without striking the game.

47: 55. **cloth of tissue.** Cloth interwoven with gold or silver. — 61. **Switzers.** The Swiss were long famous as hired soldiers and were kept near the person of sovereigns for their fidelity. — 68. **Thy ghostly father.** Thy spiritual father, the priest who shrives you.

48: 76. **change perfumes for plasters.** That is, contract disease. — 78. **Your new-ploughed forehead-defiance!** Your defiance that wrinkles up the forehead like a new-ploughed field. Brachiano implies that the defiance of Francisco is merely forehead defiance. — 92. **A mere tale of a tub.** An idle story, as we should say, a fairy-tale. — 93. **But to express . . . natural reason.** To express the thought in ordinary fashion. — 94. **When stags grow melancholic.** In allusion to the popular notion that the stag sheds tears on the approach of death.

49: 110. **Homer's frogs.** In allusion to *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, attributed to Homer. — 123. **up, and follow.** That is, rush into battle.

50: 132. **That fall that year.** In the fall of that year. — 134. **press.** Impress. Giovanni of course plays on the word. — 145. **You have charmed me.** You have wrought me to your way of thinking. — 147. **So.** Indeed, very well.

51: 160. **what that Italian means.** That is, what the word for jealousy means in Italian. The Italians are notable for jealousy. — 162. **As I to you a virgin.** As when I came to you a *virgin.*

52: 183. **Like a shavèd Polack.** Polander. Morysor traveller, reports that it was a custom among the Poles at thi to shave the greater part of the head.

54: 261. **manet alta mente repostum.** It remains stored in the depths of the mind. *Æneid*, I. 26. — 270. **bring dow stomach.** Quiet her temper.

55: 286. **but I'll send him to Candy.** In allusion, possit death by a poisoned sweetmeat, or to Candy or Candia, as b distant place, just as we might say " I'll send him to Ballyhac 286. **Here's another property, too.** Another tool which be turned to special purpose. — 291. **he confessed a ju ment . . . non plus.** He avoided the penalty by owning the offence and pleading for mercy.

57: 353. **blast your cornucopia.** Make less your abundar horns. Compare above, l. 323, the translation in the te *Inopem me copia fecit.*

60. Scene I. The scene is Camillo's house. — 14. **keep a ct** A docked horse, here in allusion to Banks's famous trained l believed by the superstitious to perform his tricks by superna agencies, and finally burnt at Rome.

62. compliment who shall begin. Exchange courtesy a beginning. — 44. **plotted forth the room.** Arrested and t away as the result of a plot. — 46. **The engine of all.** The d by which all was accomplished. — 52. **this shall stand.** service shall remain as firm as the seal, etc.

63. Scene II. The scene is Monticelso's palace. — 6. **T approbation.** *Their* refers to the lieger ambassador 11. **What, are you in by the week?** To the lawyer, Flam appears to be under arrest. — 13. **sit upon thy sister.** A judges or possibly as jurors .— 25. **catch conies.** Catch rab To " catch conies " was, in Elizabethan language, to play the fessional sharper.

64: 52. **the builder oak.** Possibly the gallows, as Sam suggests.

65: 60. **politic respect.** Regard for politic action. — 80. **bro in a candle.** Webster probably wrote " caudle."

66: 91. **Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pest mulierum corruptissimam.** Reverend judge, look upon this this most corrupt of women. — 104. **give aim.** To cry aim *give aim was* to encourage the archer. — 108. **connive . . . *versivolent,*** etc. These unusual and difficult words are a v

off on the verbiage of lawyers; we should be content to understand them as well as Vittoria.

67: 119. **to Latin.** In comparison with Latin. — 126. **fustian.** It was both a coarse cloth and a term for the language of rant and bombast. — 139. **A woman . . . effected.** A woman of most prodigious spirit is revealed in her.

68: 144–147. **Yet like . . . ashes.** One of the marvels which is found in the travels of Sir John Maundeville. "Faire apples, and faire of colour to beholde; but whoso brekethe hem, or cuttethe hem in two, he schalle fynde within hem coles and cyndres." — 151. **scarlet.** The colour of the cardinal's robe.

69: 186. **sample them all.** Afford a sample of them all. — 190. **husband.** With a play on the meaning, steward, manager, one who therefore renders accounts. — 195. **I' th' rushes.** The floors in Elizabethan houses were strewn with rushes.

70: 198. **Wound up.** Shrouded in a winding sheet. — 207. **this Christian court.** Vittoria plays on the word. The ecclesiastical courts, where cases of adultery were tried were so called. — 214. **my defence . . . like Portia's.** The original reads Perseus, — clearly a misprint. Mitford emended "Portia's," which Dyce explained as an allusion to the trial scene of *The Merchant of Venice*. Sampson calls this naïve, and refers the allusion to Cato's daughter, who died in the "masculine" manner, if it be such, of eating live coals. But why should it be "naïve" to assume that a contemporary should allude to the most striking scene of a popular play, a trial scene, too, in which a woman argues in masculine attire, especially when Webster shows everywhere an acquaintance with Shakespeare?

71: 251. **Your letters . . . lies.** The "letters" of the clergy are the pledges which a priest makes when he enters the church.

72: 257. **a demy foot-cloth.** A half foot-cloth. A "foot-cloth" was a covering for a horse used in state processions and in tournaments. — 269. **The act of blood let pass.** Let the question of the murder pass. — 280. **Casta est quam nemo rogavit.** She is a chaste woman, to whom no man has made advances.

73: 309. **as loving As to my thoughts.** So curious or solicitous as to reach unto my thoughts.

74: 327. **Rialto talk.** The talk of the town. — 343. **a house of convertites.** A house of correction.

76: 375. **We'll shake hands . . . grave together.** The grave of Brachiano's wife, sister of Francisco. — 399. **Wilt please . . . a little?** *Addressed* to the ambassadors.

78: 447. **victual under the line.** Like food in the tropics, under the equator. — 449. **here they sell justice . . . death with.** They take bribes while they are torturing men in the name of justice. Weights were used in torture.

79: 459. **The first blood shed . . . religion.** See *Genesis* iv. 4. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering: but unto Cain he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." — 460. **Would I were a Jew!** In which case he would have no obligations to a religion that permits such injustice. — 471. **practise the art of Wolner in England.** Wolner was a notorious glutton of the day, finally overmastered in his attempts to eat strange things by a live eel.

80: 502. **melancholic hare.** Tradition attributed melancholy to the hare. — 504. **couple grieve.** In allusion to the laughter of imaginary passers-by. Flamineo is feigning madness. — 510. **saucer Of a witch's congealed blood.** It is doubtful if this is referable to any actual incantation or rather an invention of Flamineo's fertile imagination.

81: 538. **you do break.** That is, break your promise.

82: 548. **Ud'sdeath!** A form of *God's death.* — Scene III. The scene continues Monticelso's palace. 2. **And let them dangle . . . bride's hair.** It was customary for brides to walk to church with hair hanging loose.

84: 49. **By taking up commodities.** That is, taking goods at a reduced price or furnishing goods to borrowers which they might sell at a reduction. Usury was prohibited by law in Elizabethan times.

85: 74. **by this.** The list of Monticelso. — 89. **Nay, laundress, three armies.** Nay, did I want laundresses, the list would furnish me a sufficient number for three armies. Laundresses were notorious panders. — 93. **Divinity.** Theological argument.

86: 136. **Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.** If I cannot change the gods above, I will move the infernal regions.

87. Scene I. The scene is the House of Convertites.

88: 20. **coffined in a baked meat.** Cooked in a pie.

89: 48. **O'er head and ears in water.** A play on changeable stuff or watered silk. — 55. **I am not in Russia.** This is a reference to the cruel treatment given those who in Russia were committed for small offences. — 61. **a Spanish fig, or an Italian *sallet.*** *Poisoning* by the means suggested here was very common *in Spain and Italy.* *Sallet* = salad. — 63. **ply your convoy.** Ply

your trade. — Scene II. The scene continues in the House of Convertites.

90: 10. **politic ignorance!** Ignorance which is feigned. — 11. **You are reclaimed, are you? . . . bells.** You have come back from your wild flight, have you? When a hawk was being trained a thread was tied into the leather band about its leg, by means of which it could be drawn back or "reclaimed." Each leg of the hawk was fitted with a bell. — 17. **beheld the devil in crystal!** Astrologers were accustomed to look into crystals, claiming to be able to make divinations from the spirits which they saw in them. Vittoria is, of course, the devil so seen.

91: 40. **sick o' th' palsy . . . foxes 'bout them.** That the strong odor of the fox had curative powers was a common belief.

95. Scene III. The scene is without the Vatican. The actual choice of this Pope, who was called Sixtus V, took place in the Sistine Chapel.

96: 38. **scrutiny . . . admiration.** "Two of the methods of electing a Pope," says Sampson, "are here referred to. Scrutiny is balloting. . . . Admiration [doubtless a misprint for 'adoration'], is an act of reverence on the part of the cardinals, who approach one of their number, kneel to him and acclaim him Pope." A vote of two-thirds of the members by either method formerly constituted an election.

97: 43–45. **Denuntio vobis . . . Paulum Quartum.** I announce to you the joyous news, the most reverend Cardinal, Lorenzo de Monticelso, is elected to the apostolic see, and takes for himself the name, Paul the Fourth. — 60. **Concedimus . . . peccatorum.** We grant unto you the apostolic benediction and remission of your sins.

99: 94. **the career, The sault, and the ring galliard.** Tricks of horsemanship. The *career* is simply running, the *sault*, leaping.

101. Scene I. The scene is in Brachiano's Palace, Padua.

102: 53. **and must crave . . . revels.** That is, must beg you to be a guest at our Duchess' revels.

103: 69. **pair of beads.** String of beads.

104: 94. **That is my countryman.** This is spoken in reference to Francisco, disguised as a Moor.

106: 183. **from protesting to drinking.** From making solemn vows to drinking.

107: *191.* **clapped by th' heels.** Put in the stocks. It was *against the law* to strike anyone in the precincts of the court.

109. Scene II. The scene continues in Brachiano's pala
10. **Was not this crucifix my father's?** Spoken in refe
to the crucifix about Cornelia's neck.

111: 69. **grazed.** Lost in the grass; the allusion is t
familiar trick of shooting a second arrow at random in ho
finding one already lost.

114: 54. **within compass o' th' verge.** Within the
of the horizon. — 56. **like a wolf in a woman's breast.**
wolf is probably the lupus, or cancer, that often attack
breast.

116: 116. **a gown whipped with velvet.** Trimmed with
of velvet. — 124. **th' argument . . . stagger in 't.** It
serious matter when churchmen become drunkards.

117: 137–147. **Domine . . . in lævum.** Since Gasparo
Lodovico are pretending to be priests, they speak Latin in
forming the last rites over Brachiano. The passage will be f
translated in Sampson's edition of Webster.

119: 178. **Though she had practised . . . pest-house.**
reference to the report that nurses sometimes strangled pl
patients in order to save themselves the trouble of taking ca
them. — 185. **they sell water so good cheap.** That is, wc
sell water at such a good bargain. The allusion contained in "
rivers to the city" has reference to the project of Sir Hugh Mi
ton to increase the London water supply, a project completed
in 1613. — 194. **tricks of a Machiavelian!** In Elizabe
times Machiavelli was considered the type of politic and unscr
lous dealing. — 198. **saffron.** Commonly employed as a sti
lant. — 200. **To teach court honesty . . . ice.** The antece
of *it* seems almost certainly to be *feat*. The passage ma
paraphrased: The suddenness with which one may fall who ju
on ice is not to be compared to the speed with which one may
his reputation at court. — 200. **jumps on ice.** Undertake sc
thing dangerous.

120: 216. **yon's the infernal.** In reference to Zanche.

122: 261. **that sunburnt proverb.** See *Jeremiah* xiii.
"Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" — 269. **Purge the
ease with laurel.** That is, we do away with all serious
siderations of justice by setting above justice the fame we s
gain by this act. Partridges were supposed to eat laurel leave
cure themselves of disease.

***123:* 26. Anacharsis.** Anacharsis was a Thracian prince

lived in sixth century B.C. — 28. **cordial cullis.** A *cullis* was a rich soup. Gold was sometimes used in its concoction.

124: 64. **They are behind the traverse.** The *traverses* were curtains concealing, at need, the inner stage.

125: 77–79. **There's rosemary . . . for myself.** The echo of words of the mad Ophelia must be apparent to the most casual reader. — 94. **an you will.** If you will.

127. Scene V. Sampson assigns this short scene to a street.

128. Scene VI is again the palace of Brachiano. — 13. **I give that portion . . . brother.** See *Genesis* iv. 12.

129: 21. **two case of pistols.** A case of two pistols. — 24. **These stones.** Possibly a far-fetched reference to the bullets with which the pistols were supposed to be loaded.

130: 64. **Like mandrakes . . . shrieking.** The resemblance between the mandrake root and the human figure is constantly emphasized in Elizabethan times. — 65. **grammatical laments.** Mere rhetorical sorrow.

131: 90. **taster.** The name applied to one who tasted a dish in order to warrant the absence of poison.

132: 104. **O Lucian . . . purgatory!** These are not the examples of Lucian, though prompted by a passage in the second dialogue, Menippos. — 105. **tagging points.** Making lace.

133: 142. **drive a stake.** In allusion to the treatment of the bodies of suicides. — 146. **And doubled all your reaches.** That is, fathomed the utmost depth of your trickery. — 157. **artillery-yard.** A practice ground near Bishopsgate Street without.

134: 163. **forty-nine of her sisters . . . one night.** Danaus had made his fifty daughters promise that they would kill their husbands on their wedding night to avenge an ancient grudge. All obeyed except Hypermnestra. — 167. **A matachin.** A dance in which the performers were clothed in short jackets and wore gilt paper helmets, also carrying sword and buckler. — 168. **Churchmen.** Lodovico and Gasparo are dressed as Capuchins dress.

137: 264. **like the lions i' th' Tower on Candlemasday.** The tradition seems to have been that if the sun shone on Candlemasday, the lions would mourn because they knew that winter was not broken up. A similar tradition is held to-day in America in regard to the ground-hog.

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

143. Scene I. A presence-chamber in the Duchess' palace at Amalfi.—18. **Inform him the corruption.** Tell the king of the corruption.

144: 30. **So.** Do you ? — 36. **two towels instead of a shirt.** A jocularly bitter remark on his rags. Cf. *I Henry IV*, IV. ii, 46: "There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves."

145: 63. **geometry is his last supportation.** Sampson explains, "geometry presumably implies that a man on crutches looks like a pair of compasses," as he walks measuring the ground. — Scene II. A gallery in the palace at Amalfi.

146: 6. **Who took the ring oftenest?** To take the ring is to thrust a lance through a ring, dislodging it, while riding at a gallop. This was a favourite sport of Prince Henry, son of King James. — 30. **to lie . . . all in tents.** *To lie* meant to lodge also; *tents* were the swathings of lint with which the wounded were bandaged.

147: 50. **your fool.** Any fool. — 73. **Now, sir, your promise.** That is, his promise to tell Delio about the characters of some of the court people.

148: 75. **five thousand crowns at tennis.** This was not an exaggeration of the high stakes sometimes played at this game. The poet Suckling in the next generation nearly ruined himself financially at this game. — 80. **The spring in his face . . . engendering of toads.** Any pleasant looks which he may have are caused by his gloating over some foul scheme. — 84. **political monsters.** *Political* is here used in the sense of practising policy, low intrigue of any kind. — 97. **Dooms men to death by information.** That is, passes sentence upon men merely from what he hears about them. — 102. **shrewd turns.** Tricks of deceit.

149: 110. **Cast in one figure.** Made in the same mould. — 127. **You play . . . her commendations.** You praise her to excess as a wire-drawer draws out the metal fine.

152: 205. **my corruption Grew out of horse-dung.** That is, came by way of magic.

153: 216. **more spotted Than Laban's sheep.** See *Genesis*

xxx. 35. — 220. **that motion.** That determination. *Motion* is here used for movement of the mind. — 231. **Subtler than Vulcan's engine.** The net with which Vulcan caught Mars and Venus.

154: 265. **I winked.** Chose blindly.

156: 321. **'tis very sovereign.** That is, a sovereign remedy for disease. Such powers were often connected with rings.

157: 331. **This goodly roof of yours.** Possibly a reference to Antonio's head as he is kneeling before her. — 347. **darkening of your worth.** Underestimating of your worth, in allusion to the practice of tradesmen who darkened their shops to conceal the inferiority of their goods.

158: 379. **Quietus est.** This Latin phrase was used to indicate the final settlement of an account.

159: 391. **Per verba presenti.** In the hearing of one who is present.

160: 412. **Like the old tale in Alexander and Lodowick.** The detail referred to was an episode common in the romantic tales of the Middle Ages. A very early occurrence of it may be found in the story of "Tristram and Iseult." There was a play called *Alexander and Lodowick* in the earlier drama.

161. Scene I. A room in the palace of the Duchess. — 18. **roaring boys.** The swaggering roughs and bullies of the town were so called in the slang of the day. — 24. **one of the prime night-caps.** Webster himself explains the word four lines above as "an eminent fellow."

162: 27. **Why . . . face-physic.** Elizabethan drama is full of diatribes against women's use of cosmetics. Bosola's brutal abuse of the "Old Lady" may have been suggested, as Sampson says, by Mercutio's teasing of Juliet's Nurse. — 40–42. **witchcraft . . . ordure.** This horrible passage has been referred for its original to Ariosto's *Satires*, 1608, as translated by Tofte. — 43. **dead pigeon.** This strange remedy is to be found among like receipts in *The English Huswife*, 1615.

163: 68. **Your wife's gone . . . Lucca.** This is addressed to Castruccio. Lucca was the seat of famous baths. — 76. **I have bought some apricocks.** See below, Scene II, ll. 1–3: "So, so, there's no question but her techiness and most vulturous eating of the apricocks, are apparent signs of breeding."

164: 101. **you are lord of the ascendant.** The ascendant, according to astrology, was that particular part of the heavens

which was arising at a given time. A planet in that part which was called the house was lord of the ascendant. Hence the phrase meant to be in high good fortune. — 119. **mend my ruff.** Set my ruff to rights. — 121. **lemon peels.** To sweeten the breath. The original edition reads *pils.*

165: 137. **to year.** This year.

167. Scene II. An outer room in the palace at Amalfi. — 7. **the glass-house.** The place where bottles are blown. See above note, p. 38, l. 139.

170: 87. **set a figure for's nativity.** Determine the star under which he was born, cast his horoscope. — Scene III. A court of the palace. — 5. **have part of it.** Play my part in this stratagem.

171: 20–22. **setting a figure . . . radical.** Astrology was popularly employed for the discovery of stolen articles. *Radical* is a technical term. — 33. **a Spanish fig For the imputation.** The term *Spanish fig* was accompanied by a gesture made by inserting the thumb between the fore and the middle finger. In Elizabethan days this was a sign of the greatest contempt; figs were a common medium of poison in Spain and Italy at this time. — 40. **Are you scarce warm?** Scarce warm in your place.

172: 42. **My nose bleeds.** Commonly accounted an omen of coming misfortune. — 45. **letters . . . wrought.** In allusion to the letters wrought or embroidered on this handkerchief. — 55. **Some of your help, false friend.** Addressed to his lantern. — 56. **nativity.** This nativity is properly calculated according to the rules of the art. "The *lord of the first house* (Saturn, an evil planet) is *combust* when within fifteen degrees of Sol; Mars is also an evil planet; a *human sign* is one of the signs of the Zodiac which has a human form, as Virgo, Aquarius; the first house signifies body, head, face, and the eighth house signifies kind of death." (Searles, quoted by Sampson).

173. Scene IV. A room in the Cardinal's palace at Rome. — 17. **glass . . . Galileo.** This was a recent event at the date of the play.

174: 28–30. **I have taken . . . fly at it.** The Cardinal is using the language of hawking. — 39. **like one in physic.** Under treatment for disease.

175: 57. **Your laughter Is my pity.** I am sorry for that which *causes you* laughter. — 65. **Nor is it physical.** Possessed of *medicinal* properties. — 66. **Persuade us seeth't in cullises.**

cullis was a strong broth, into which gold entered at times as an ingredient.

176. Scene V. The scene continues in the Cardinal's palace. — 3. **she's loose i' th' hilts.** She's a strumpet.

179: 79. **general eclipse.** Complete destruction of her and hers.

180. Scene I. A room in the palace at Amalfi. — 7. **She hath had two children more.** Considerable time must have elapsed since Antonio and Delio last met. — 14. **the reversion of some great man's place.** The promise of some great man's place after he has left it vacant.

181: 49. **Pasquil's paper-bullets.** Lampoons pasted on a mutilated statute in Rome and commonly called *pasquils* or *pasquinades* from a satirical cobbler named Pasquin, who began the practice.

182: 57. **Hot burning coulters.** One of the trials of chastity actually practised in the middle ages.

183. Scene II. The bedchamber of the Duchess, Amalfi. — 7. **you are a lord of misrule.** The lord of misrule was the master of revels at Christmas time in the old English celebration, hence a name applied to anyone who upset the natural order of things or did as he pleased.

184: 27. **Anaxarete.** She suffered this fate because she had refused the love of Iphis, who committed suicide therefore. — 40. **'twas a motion.** *Motion* here appears to mean a puppet-show, a sight, as we might say.

185: 69. **'Tis welcome.** If Antonio has lost his tongue, he will be much less liable to say something which will cause his overthrow. The Duchess, on account of the darkness, is not aware of the fact that Antonio has gone, but supposes Ferdinand is he.

186: 88. **If I could change Eyes with a basilisk.** The eyes of the basilisk killed at a distance. — 94. **thy discovery.** The discovery of thee.

188: 141. **So you have . . . witches.** That is, possessed of youth and beauty when in reality they are witches.

189: 177. **enginous wheels.** Wheels that run with the swiftness of an engine.

190: 190. **let him.** Equivocally either stop him or hinder him, like the rest of the passage.

191: 215. **He could not . . . pig's head gaping.** Pork being offensive to a Jew. — 225. **chippings of the buttery.** Bread crumbs used to scour silver. — 230. **His dirty stirrup . . . their**

noses. As a sign of inferiority. The serf followed the lord who rode on horseback, so that one might say their noses were rivetted to his stirrup.

192: 267. **Bermoothes.** The Bermudas.

193: 309. **our lady of Loretto.** A famous shrine of the Virgin was situated here. It was supposed that the house of the Virgin had been transported here from Nazareth.

194: 316. **Lucca, Spa.** Both notable watering resorts. — Scene III. The Cardinal's palace at Rome.

195: 12. **A voluntary lord.** One serving of his own free will. — 18. **City Chronicle.** His knowledge of warfare is that of an officer of militia. — 19. **two pewterers going.** Two pewter-smiths making models of battles. — 26. **taking prisoner.** Being taken prisoner.

196: 38. **Foxes . . . in their tails.** Thus Samson destroyed the Philistines. See *Judges* xv. 4 — 49. **A very salamander . . . violence of fire.** The salamander was supposed to be able to live in fire. The eyes of Ferdinand flash at the news he hears.

197: 7. **Arms, and honours deck thy story.** A marginal note of the quarto of 1623 reads: " The author disclaims this ditty to be his."

199. Scene V. On the road near Loretto.

201: 47. **what of this?** The letter. — 62. **out of frame.** Out of order.

203: 116. **that counterfeit face.** The mask which Bosola wears.

205. Scene I. A room in the Duchess' palace at Amalfi.

207: 62–64. **Than were't my picture . . . dunghill.** One of the familiar methods of practising against life employed by those dealing in witchcraft. — 70. **Portia.** That is, Brutus' Portia who took her life by swallowing live coals.

210: 129. **by my intelligence.** By the intelligence which I have given you, which makes Bosola an informer against the Duchess. — Scene II. The scene continues the same.

211: 24. **to my cause of sorrow.** Woe is me.

212: 55. **an excellent knave in grain.** A pun is intended on the expression " dyed in grain." — 56. **hindered transportation.** Prohibited from exporting his corn.

213: 85. **to Puritans that have sore throats with overstraining.** Because they have sung so many hymns and said so many *long prayers.* — 88–90. **You do give . . . ancient gentleman.** *A woodcock* was the symbol of stupidity. A man who gave his

crest as "a woodcock's head with the brain's picked out on't" would be a very ancient gentleman indeed. — 92. **we are only to be saved by the Helvetian translation.** That is, the Geneva Bible, the work of Coverdale, Whittingham, and other Englishmen living in Calvin's Protestant commonwealth of Geneva. This was the version of the extreme Puritans.

217: 219. **strange geometrical hinges.** Strange magical hinges.

219: 254. **Let this lie still.** This is spoken of the body of the Duchess. — 255. **Shows the children.** By drawing a curtain.

221: 322. **Doth take much in a blood.** Runs in families.

222: 346. **Her eye opes.** The revival of the Duchess after strangling seems reminiscent of the case of Desdemona. The doctors are at variance as to the truth of such a revival to life.

224. Scene I. Milan, a public place. — 6. **in cheat.** In escheat. Lands which, on account of the absence of lawful heirs, reverted to the lord of a fee, were said to be held in cheat. — 10. **To be invested . . . revenues.** To receive the income which is now paid you. — 19. **St. Bennet.** St. Benedict.

227. Scene II. A gallery in the residence of the Cardinal at Rome. — 6. **lycanthropia.** Madness in which the madman imagines himself a wolf.

228: 48. **To drive six snails . . . Moscow.** In his madness Ferdinand thinks of a striking example of patience.

229: 62. **The white of a cockatrix's egg.** The doctor is humouring the madman by answering him in the terms of his own folly. — 70. **fetch a frisk.** Cut a caper. — 77. **Barber-Chirurgeon's hall.** This was situated in Monkwell Street. The barbers, as is well known, were the first surgeons.

231: 125. **style me Thy advancement.** Call on me to advance you. — 139. **Who bought her picture lately.** The picture of the Duchess.

234: 230. **I must be your secretary.** The sharer of your secrets.

235: 245. **Will you rack me?** Torture me with questions as one on the rack.

237: 298. **And wherefore . . . rotten purposes to me?** A figure drawn from the custom of painting woodwork to imitate marble.

239. *Scene III.* Milan, without the Cardinal's residence.

241: 59. **Contempt of pain . . . our own.** Contempt of pain is the only thing in time of misery that we can call our own. — Scene IV. A room in the residence of the Cardinal, with a gallery. — 19. **now I have protested against it.** Now that I have solemnly promised not to do it.

243: 66. **I am glad . . . in sadness.** Seriously, I am glad that I shall do it, that is, die.

244: 90. **thou represent . . . The thing thou bear'st.** Be as silent as the dead body thou bearest. — Scene V. The scene remains the same.

247: 62. **what hath former been.** What hath formerly been. — 76. **I will vault credit.** Outdo belief.

248: 97. **Here i' th' rushes.** The regular floor-covering of the times.

249: 123. **Fall in a frost.** Slip on the ice which the frost has made.

APPIUS AND VIRGINIA

255. Scene I. Rome before the Senate-house.

256: 24. **I have seen . . . them.** This sentiment is repeated from *The Duchess of Malfi*, I. ii, 380-381. Such repetitions are a familiar trick of Webster's. — 37. **when yonder.** In the Capitol. — 49. **I'll fit them for't.** That is, give my relatives a chance to warm them in my sunshine.

257: 56. **aspire eminent place.** Aspire to eminent place. — 74. **Never were great men . . . shadows.** The things which invariably accompany high office, such as envy, criticism, and endless responsibility. — 75. **this general frame.** The material universe. — 78. **noble friends.** Appius speaks ironically to his cousins.

258: 90. **The gods conduct you hither!** That is, to this office. — 100. **travail.** In the double sense to journey and to labour.

259. Scene II. A room in the house of Virginius. — 6. **were you poor.** Even if you were poor. — 10. **it.** My character. — 11. **Here.** That is, in Virginia.

260: 13. **ceremonious chapel.** A chapel which is a place of sacred ceremony. — 14. **a thronging presence.** The crowded presence-chamber of a prince. — 15–17. **I am confirmed, the *court* . . . court.** I am convinced that the court makes some ladies *appear fairer*, etc., but Virginia's port (bearing) being simple virtue,

beautifies the court. — 37. **quails.** Quails were used like cocks for fighting. — 39. **In this form . . . horseman.** Appearing as an overspent horseman.

261. Scene III. A room in the house of Appius Claudius. — 10. **I am uncrannied.** There are in me no leaks by which secrets will out. — 15. **thine ear.** — Dyce's reading for "thine ever."

262: 35. **I'll prostrate you.** I'll pander to you, make it possible for you to gratify your desires.

263. Scene IV. The Senate-chamber. — 9. **yon great star-chamber.** The heavens.

264: 55. **To furs and metal.** The outward show of public office. — 58. **an infinite.** A vast number.

265: 74. **double-dye . . . in scarlet.** Scarlet being the colour of office as of blood. — 77. **Let Janus' . . . devolved.** Let the gates of the temple of Janus be swung open. These gates remained open while an army was in the field.

266: 93. **perdue.** Enemies lying "perdue," that is, hidden, in ambush. — 104–106. **wounds . . . searched.** That is, probed. — 107. **pore upon their bags.** Play the miser. — 114. **The earth shall find.** The earth shall provide for.

267: 129. **to urge you . . . contract.** To urge you to take the necessary steps for our union, in this case merely public announcement. *Contract* is accented, as usual at the time, on the second syllable. — 150. **Thou wilt . . . forbear.** You will pay usurious interest for what you hold back.

268. Scene I. A street. — 5. **and get an heir.** The freedom of Elizabethan speech, and especially the liberties allowed by the clown or household fool, are always matters of wonder to the reader unused to the manners of old time. However we may congratulate ourselves on our cleaner language, we must be careful not to confound bad manners with corrupt morals. — 14. **as well as mulier.** That is, a woman. The clown means to imply that she desires all the things which please a woman.

269: 29. **to fame his industry.** Make famous his ability to wait an occasion. — 32. **Express your greatest art.** Play your best. This is spoken to the musicians. — 41. **You mediate . . . for courtesies.** You try to excuse what is really courtesy. — 47. **Proud to usurp your notes.** *Usurp* means simply to take up.

270: 70. **make your beauty populous.** Bring it to the knowledge of all. — 75. **a refined citizen.** Icilius is only a plebeian. —

85. **Shadow.** Conceal it from Appius. — Scene II. The camp before Algidum.

272: 44. **Carouse our blood.** Drink to the intoxication of our blood. — 53. **Cut poor men's throats at home.** In allusion to the ruin wrought by extortionate money-lenders.

273: 65. **Two summers.** The plenty of two summers or harvests.

274: 98. **Is your gall burst?** Does your venom show itself? — 103. **shoot your quills.** In accord with a popular idea as to the porcupine.

275: 113. **Advance your pikes!** As we would say, present arms. — 136. **Refuse me!** May God refuse me entrance into heaven!

276: 157–160. **every captain . . . obedient.** Every captain bears in his private government (over his own company) that (*i.e.* the same) form (kind of rule) which kings should bear (wield) over their subjects; and to them (*i.e.* captains, their troops) should be equally obedient.

278. Scene III. Rome, an outer room in the house of Appius.

281: 92. **Our secretary.** Appius begins an excuse in which Marcus, " our secretary," is to figure.

283: 134. **Morrow.** A shortened form of *Good-morrow.* — 135. **It is no more indeed.** That is, than morning. — 146. **Pantheon gods.** All ye gods of the Pantheon.

284: 178. **notes probable.** Written statements which will serve as proof. — 190. **t' have warrants by arrest.** To get a warrant for her arrest.

286. Scene I. Rome, a room in the house of Numitorius. — 11. **when.** An exclamation of impatience equivalent to " Be about it then." — 15. **a light woman.** A wanton woman.

287: 22. **My [foster-] child.** *Foster* is an emendation proposed by Mr. Dyce to supply a defect in the early editions of the play, which read, " My most — child."

289: 92. **Showed . . . 'gainst himself.** His handwriting in the letters to Virginia. — 112. **let's then preserve ourselves.** That is, protect ourselves by avoiding open opposition to Appius.

290. Scene II. Rome, the Forum. — 9. **'Tis strange . . . debts.** The lictor supposes that he is to arrest Virginia on the charge of debt.

291: 23. **your French fly.** A blistering fly used in the treatment of certain diseases. *French rheum* is a euphemism for such

diseases. — 27. **lay him i' th' kennel.** Knock him down in the middle of the street where ran the Elizabethan kennel or gutter. — 29. **kennel him i' th' counter.** Shut him up in the Compter, a prison for debtors situated in Southwark. *Counter* was equivalent to any prison. — 41. **Here's the beauty.** Indicating the nurse. — 53. **Of all waters . . . a widow's tears.** Because there is little salt for powdering (or preserving like corned beef) in them, *i.e.* they are feigned.

292: 63. **and lastly the reversion.** That part of the property of a widow which must return to the relatives of the husband. — 74. **hard to be spoke with.** Hard to procure. — 78. **.And fresh cod . . . thick and threefold.** That is, sold in a great hurry. The language of the clown throughout conveys an innocent sense to Virginia and happily likewise to us; but to the knowing of the time his words are full of improprieties and worse. — 79. **go together by the ears for't.** Fight for it. — 81. **mutton's mutton.** The clown plays on the word as elsewhere. — 84. **the sinners i' th' suburbs . . . away from't.** There has sprung up such a number of houses of ill fame in the suburbs that the business has been almost destroyed in the city. — 86. **the term time . . . calendar.** The time of the meeting of the general sessions is the greatest period in the year for the selling of mutton, that is, the most flourishing period for prostitutes.

293: 96. **cuckoos.** It was customary to cry cuckoo to a man whose wife was known to be false to him. — 106. **tall followers.** This refers to the lictors who are with Marcus. *Tall* means soldierly, brave.

294: 132. **Shall . . . smooth cozenage.** *Which* is to be understood before *shall*. — 134. **Howe'er.** However that may be.

296: 185. **on their parts.** On their side.

297: 208. **And view . . . proofs.** As Marcus makes this speech he hands a written statement of his case to Appius.

299: 280. **referring . . . particular censure.** Referring the particular or private wrong which I may have suffered by the actions of Marcus to a separate judgement.

301: 327. **and must not lie . . . forthcoming.** Must not be left in charge of a man who will pledge himself for her appearance before the judge. Propriety demands that a woman so act. — 341. **keep you safe from starting.** Put you where you will not run away.

302: 354. **still hold dread.** Always hold in apprehension. —

359. **And confounding ignorance.** Icilius refers to the ignorance of facts necessary to free Virginia. — Scene III. A room in the house of Appius.

303: 22. **In high attempts . . . infinite eyes.** When one is attempting great things, the insight becomes all-seeing. — Scene IV. A street.

304: 12. **Wide of the bow-hand.** Considerably to the left of the hand that holds the bow, the left hand. — 34. **amongst curs a trendle-tail.** A trendle-tail, a dog with a curling tail. The point of all these expressions is that the clown regards himself as the most despised creature of a despised type of animal. — 46. **on the knight side, nor in the twopenny ward.** The names of two wards in the old Compter prison in Southwark.

305: 48. **in the hole.** This likewise has reference to the worst part of the prison. The vulgar equivoque of this detestable clown throughout is obvious.

306. Scene I. Rome, before the tribunal of Appius. — 9. **Is still carousing Lethe.** Drunk with forgetfulness. — 11. **Rhadamant.** Rhadamanthus, one of the judges in the lower world.

307: 38–40. **We have . . . doom.** This may be paraphrased: The sense of justice in Rome is not sufficient to prevent, by law or by violence, the act which Appius has premeditated.

308: 56. **Your habit . . . strangely.** You look very strange in your present dress of slave. — 70. **They be not . . . against me.** That is, the laws be not made to work against me. — 76. **I stand you.** I am ready to withstand you.

309: 111. **the fellow i' th' night-cap.** The lawyer's hat of the day looked much like a night-cap.

310: 130. **this gentleman.** Marcus.

311: 143. **Cast not your noble beams.** Satirically, cast not your eyesight upon. — 159. **and so.** And in consequence.

312: 190. **At point's end.** At the conclusion of the subject under discussion, also at the sword's point.

313: 207. **by th' hand.** At any cost. "By the hand" carries with it the idea of mean trickery. — 223. **We have not such hot livers.** We are not so lascivious. The liver was supposed at this time to be the seat of the passions.

314: 256. **plebeian.** Webster means patrician.

315: 262. **O, thy opinion, old Pythagoras!** The theory of the transmigration of souls is referred to. Cf. Plato's *Republic*, Book X.

316. *Scene II.* The camp before Algidum.

318: 31. **As Dutchmen feed their soldiers.** The ill manner in which the Dutch provided for their soldiers was proverbial at this time. Such an anachronism is thoroughly Elizabethan.

320: 102. **this ugly face of blood.** Your disordered bloody appearance.

321: 141. **general tongue.** A tongue in which all speak.

323. Scene I. Rome, a street. — 18. **my court of guard.** My body-guard, hence my protection.

324: 38. **to preserve dead pays.** To secure the continuation of pay to soldiers really dead. A practice only too common in Webster's day.

325. Scene II. The Forum. — 2. **Make a stand!** Present arms. The stage direction in the older copies involved in the marginal word "wine" has reference to the wine used below. — 16. **Wilt a', wilt a'!** Will you away! Addressed to the demon of fever whom Virginius thinks is troubling him. — 22. **when?** An exclamation indicating impatience.

326: 31. **So, I thank you.** This is said in appreciation of the cup of wine which Numitorius has helped to the lips of Virginius. — 58. **here's a fury.** His own sense of remorse.

328: 100. **which first . . . reconcilement.** Who made the first move for reconciliation.

329: 6. **avees.** Salutations. — 23. **'Tis the world right.** 'Tis exactly the way of the world.

331: 69. **I'll fetch . . . anatomize his sin.** I'll go and get some one who will dissect his sin.

332: 91. **Of yon stern murderer.** It was a popular belief that the victim's wounds bled anew in the presence of the murderer. — 99. **motion.** Power to move; *belly*, body, dead trunk: the word had no such vulgar connotation as now. — 105. **hangmen.** Here executioners. — 118. **strage, Their common vengeance.** Destruction, overthrow, which is the vengeance of both famine and fire.

333: 135. **And so . . . do.** That is, die nobly.

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY

339. Enter Vendice. Enter Vendice with a skull in his hand. Collins suggests that Vendice enters on the balcony, viewing the other personages below. — 4. **that will do with devil.** Have illicit intercourse with the devil. — 13. **Turns my abused . . . into fret.** *Fret* is a term used in architecture at this time, being

applied to an iron grating of interlaced bars. The meaning is obvious. His heart strings are already abused, the awful depravity of the duke who has poisoned his beloved "turns them into fret"; that is, makes them interlace, thus intensifying his grief.

340: 24. **That sin but seven times a day.** Commit only the seven deadly sins. Vendice intends this to be taken as a comment on the society of his time. — 36. **Outbidden.** Asked to do more than they are capable of. — 44. **She has kept touch.** Has kept her appointments. — 46. **their costly three-piled flesh.** Their flesh which is as thick and soft as three-piled velvet, the heaviest kind of velvet.

341: 54. **that bald madam, Opportunity.** Fortune was commonly pictured in Elizabethan times with a long forelock, but bald on the back of her head. Collins explains this as a reference to the effect of the *lues Venerea*. — 63. **coat.** Petticoat. — 75. **strange-digested fellow.** A malcontent.

342: 99. **Occasion . . . by the foretop.** Compare Opportunity, above. — 103. **false money.** Money given as pay for being false. The brothers *coin* or pretend that Vendice is going away in order to keep his disguise a secret. — 114. **The law's a woman.** Would Justice were personified in you!

345: 44. **So, sir.** You think it so? — 56. **That lady's name.** The name of the wife of Antonio. — 65. **'sessed.** A shortened form of *assessed*. Usually applied to fixing the amount of taxes, here to determining the penalty for a crime.

346: 75. **performance.** Performance of the marital duties.

347: 97. **easy doctors.** Doctors easily bribed to administer poison. — 99. **And keep church better.** Keep the marriage vows which he took in church. — 100. **Some second wife.** The duchess is the second wife of the duke. — 109. **I'll kill him in his forehead.** By making him a cuckold. — 116. **jewel's mine . . . in his ear.** Men frequently wore earrings in old time. Both Shakespeare and Jonson are represented so adorned in old portraits.

348: 125. **a hatted dame.** At this time, women of inferior rank wore hats. — 126. **But that.** If it were not for the fact that. — 140. **For peeping . . . holiday windows.** The reference is to the pranks which were indulged in at the celebrations of saints' days, "holydays" or holidays. On such occasions many debaucheries were indulged in. — 144. **clatter barbers' basins.** These basins were hung up in front of their doors as signs. — 146. **Nay . . . *light off.*** *Alight.* The Duchess and Spurio in this and in the next

two or three speeches indulge in the common Elizabethan practice of capping proverbs. — 150. **as no doubt.** This is the elliptical use of "as." After "as" supply, "he certainly was for," etc. — 155. **the collet.** The part of a ring in which the stone is set.

349: 168. **make blood rough.** Enrage anyone of manly courage. — 176. **Earnest, and farewell.** *Earnest* was money given as a pledge for the payment of more, hence the kiss of the Duchess is a pledge for what is to follow. — 179. **woman's heraldry.** The horns of the cuckold.

350: 200. **more beholding to report.** A veiled thrust at the moral standard of the times. Spurio was known to be illegitimate. His brother's birth, though generally regarded as legitimate, was really "more beholding to report." There was no real certainty in either case.

351: 12. **scholar.** *Scholar* usually signified schoolboy and was used figuratively for immaturity or naïveté. — 16. **Save Grace the bawd.** Grace is a nickname of Gratiana, which was the name of Vendice's mother. Her son already suspects her of an inclination to prove the bawd to her own daughter's dishonour. — 17. **you reach out o' the verge now.** You are going entirely beyond bounds in suggesting so impossible a thing. — 25. **and if Time . . . Time.** Time was commonly personified as now in the figure of a bald-headed old man. — 36. **Gather him into boldness!** Urge such a man to be bold! It is plain he is bold enough. — 38. **shakes me.** With fear of his masterful spirit.

352: 49. **And not so little.** And that is nothing so very trivial. — 50. **patrimonies washed a-pieces.** Spent in drinking. — 54. **gravel a petition.** Sand was used at this time in the place of blotting paper.

353: 77. **And deeply . . . into all estates.** Well acquainted with the nature and management of all affairs. — 87. **I enter thee,** on my books, metaphorically; engage thee my servant. Note the later play on the word, in its sense to possess as a devil possesses a man. — 87. **This Indian devil.** The love of money, India being the seat of wealth. — 94. **Many waxed lines.** Carefully perfected lines. Compare the expression, a man of wax. — 99. **Phœnix.** A term applied to anything unusual. The fabulous Arabian bird which existed single and rose again from its own ashes.

354: 105. **can defend Marriage is good.** Can defend the thesis that marriage is good. — 115. **the portion of her soul . . . her *chastity.*** *Castiza* has probably said, or it may be taken for granted

that she would, if given the opportunity, say that her chastity was the chief part of her soul. — 116. **bring it into expense.** Make it a matter of barter. — 117. **money laid to sleep.** Money put aside as savings. — 119. **gi'en't the tang.** Hit the nail on the head. — 130. **put a man in.** Admit a man to her favours.

355: 153. **mystery of a woman.** The mystery of what a woman really is.

357: 17. **Melius . . . vivere.** Better to die in virtue than to live in disgrace. — 23. **Curæ . . . stupent.** Light griefs speak, heavier ones are silent. — 24. **You deal with truth.** You are right.

358: 43. **damnation of both kinds.** Sin incurring loss of body and of soul. — 48. **of rare fire compact.** All things, according to the older science, were composed of earth, air, fire, or water. Fire and air were the more spiritual elements.

361: 44. **take the wall.** In passing on the Elizabethan street, to give the wall was to show courtesy or confess inferiority, as the kennel or gutter ran in the middle of the street. To take the wall was hence to assume superiority. — 45. **I'm above my tongue.** What I say does not represent my feelings.

362: 60. **like to be our sudden duke.** Likely at any moment (suddenly) to become our duke by the death of his decrepit father. — 61. **every tide.** All the time, constantly. — 70. **wheel.** Turn of good fortune.

363: 98. **Should keep men after men.** Enable me to keep a train of serving men.

365: 154. **come by yourselves.** Come to be yourselves. — 163. **that knows.** That is acquainted with the true character of her own mother, with a play of course on the proverb: 'Tis a wise child that knows his own father.

366: 182. **will keep less charge.** Will not bear such a heavy burden. — 188. **petitionary people.** To make people put up petitions to you because of your influence. — 202. **but let horns wear 'em.** The antlers on which hats were hung in ancient halls, with the usual *double entendre.*

367: 215. **a hundred acres on their backs.** The court-wardrobe, to obtain which they had sold their lands. — 224. **much untold.** There is much which I leave untold. — 230. **that's not honesty.** This refers to, " that's accounted best which is best followed." *Honesty* of course means chastity. — 230. **love.** *Low* is *probably the* true reading; however, a meaning is possible retaining

love. Do but note the meagreness of the love which is bestowed upon it. — 233. **that.** Chastity. — 239. **she's too inward, then!** Too much of your inward and real nature, too ingrained. — 240. **Slave . . . in thy office!** Spoken to Vendice. — 241. **mother.** Once more with a play on the word meaning hysteria. — 242. **I've outgone you.** I have held my own against you.

368: 251. **Than those . . . look downward.** "The beasts of the field." — 10. **season.** Time. Hippolito implies that he and his brother will find a time to revenge their wrongs.

370: 40. **Who's that?** Lussurioso thinks he hears some one, owing to Vendice's words aside.

371: 98. **O, lessen . . . the earth.** A reference to the fifth commandment. — 104. **beneficial perjury.** Disinterested perjury; perjury which is to yield profit to some one else.

373: 23. **damn.** By killing him at his pleasure, Vendice will prevent him from the final absolution, thus damning him. Compare Hamlet's hesitancy to kill the King because he is at his prayers. — 26. **Mark! there; there.** Vendice points at Spurio and his followers. — 29. **funeral heralds' fees.** Collins suggests *phease*, tatters or hangings; here the draperies used by conductors (heralds) of funerals.

374: 61. **This is the fruit of two beds.** The duke's falsity to his first marriage brought Spurio into the world, and the falsity of the duchess to her present marriage led to the incest of which Vendice speaks.

375: 17. **Amongst the lawyers!** By turning Lussurioso over to justice.

377: 63. **a puritan heart.** Deceptive heart.

378: 82. **before his eyes . . . sound.** He, that is, the duke, would have seen that the execution was performed before his very eyes.

379: 134. **Many a beauty . . . In the denial.** Vendice's betrothed had been so poisoned.

381: 4. **myself.** That is, Duke.

382: 20. **that is least imprudent.** The person who is least imprudent, most wary. — 22. **Our office shall be sound.** We shall perform what we are bidden. — 34. **Fine fools [are these] in office!** Because they do not know the trick the brothers are playing.

384: *44.* ***this powerful token.*** The signet.

385: *66.* ***Duns.*** A term derived from Duns Scotus, one of the

famous schoolmen of the Middle Ages. Any kind of far-fetched interpretation might be called a "Duns." — 69. **a trick . . . four cards.** In the game of primero. — 78. **good authority's bastards.** Authority is the power of the law. Possibly the speaker means to infer that the officers have no lawful right to their offices.

386: 8. **I'll divide it to thee.** Communicate it to thee.

387: 40. **And there's more . . . prices.** The concealing of vices in private is more common than the cases of these who are known, etc. — 45. **Known!** Vendice is addressing the "skull dressed up in tires" as representative of the sex, not specifically, as his betrothed. — 48. **I'll save . . . that labour.** Hippolito offers to unmask the veiled "skull." Vendice says to him "I'll save your hand," etc.; then to the "skull," "I'll unmask you," which he does. — 51. **As such all hid.** So completely hidden.

388: 75. **falsify highways.** Perhaps change boundaries.

389: 100. **property.** Implement. The context shows that the idea of stage fittings is also present in the writer's mind. — 114. **when beauty flows.** When beauty is in its ascendancy. — 116. **You have my voice.** I agree with you.

390: 138. **conduct her.** Produce her.

392: 190. **Once . . . 'tis quitted.** Adultery is sure to be paid for by the adulterer. *Once* is often used in the sense of "sometime."

393: 224. **'Tis state . . . to bleed.** It is a scene of pomp and splendour when a duke dies to the accompaniment of music.

399: 29. **a stroke of death.** Very near to killing Spurio. As Hippolito repeats the phrase it means the sword's thrust, lastly he turns that to a stroke of time in music. — 41. **lay this iron age upon thee.** Punish you with all the cruelty of this cruel age. — 46. **moved me.** Moved me from my purposes.

400: 69. **does himself work to undo him.** Does he work to undo himself. — 78. **black condition.** Melancholy condition, suffering from an excess of black bile.

401: 5. **'Twill be the quainter fallacy.** It will be a finer mistake than if he had accepted me in my disguise.

402: 14. **the realm is clad in clay.** *Realm* seems here to mean sovereignty. The sovereignty is vested (clad) in clay, since the duke, though turning to dust, is still the nominal ruler. — 25. **It is . . . to be doubtful.** It is not the least thing in intrigue to be circumspect. — 44. **gi' you good den.** A familiar form of salutation. *Vendice* assumes a rustic speech in his new disguise.

403: 49. **God in a salutation.** The complete salutation which

Vendice used was, " God give you good day." — 54. **black buckram.** In which law books were then bound. — 60. **terms.** The sittings of the courts. — 63. **having had . . . canvassed.** That is, tried. — 67. **sasarara.** A corruption of *certiorari.*

404: 104. **And thou . . . draw that out?** *That* refers to my meaning. You have interpreted my meaning in an entirely mercenary sense. — 109. **in colours.** In appearance. Compare the title of Bacon's famous *Essays on Colours* (appearances) *of Good and Evil.*

405: 146. **a likely man for pleasure.** A man who seemed likely to make a good pander.

406: 154. **Out, slave!** Lussurioso takes this as an echo of what he has just said. Vendice, of course, intends it as an execration against Lussurioso. — 158. **For chaste respect.** Because of her regard for chastity.

408: 213. **But I have found it.** A means to get out of our difficulty. — 219. **but not conveyed.** Conveyed away, disposed of. — 232. **it is substantial.** *It* refers to Vendice's plot.

409: 238. **'tis in grain.** That is, dyed in grain, in the material itself. — 5. **I'm confident you may.** Spurio's comment upon the freedom with which the duchess loves. — 12. **sleep soft.** Live luxuriously.

410: 5. **iron nipples.** Their daggers. — 7. **quarlèd.** Explained by Murray as curdled, turned sour. — 8. **Cut not your days for't!** An allusion to the fifth commandment. — 14. **thou only?** Vendice implies that no other woman hates the name of bawd.

412: 60. **O you of easy wax!** You are so easily moulded to the desire of another. — 66. **Green-coloured maids.** Of a pale and sallow complexion. — 82. **joy's a subtle elf.** A spirit which easily flies away. — 84. **now holy-watered mead.** The mother who has been purified by her tears of contrition.

418: 64. **Sa, sa, sa.** Expressions used in fencing and in a duel when a hit was made.

419: 96. **a deep revenger . . . clearest man.** A deep revenger can, when murder is discovered, so plot that he will be the least suspected of any man. — 110. **Over . . . In deadly fire.** The common belief in regard to comets.

420: 139. **Could you not stick?** Remain in the favour of your master, *Lussurioso.*

422: 185. **And if I miss his heart.** If I miss his heart. Spurio

intends to kill the new duke. — 194. **that build upon.** Meditate upon.

423: 2. **That flow in too much milk.** Are too mild, have "too much of the milk of human kindness."

424: 5. **That shine.** The smile of Lussurioso.

425: 22. **whom art and learning weds.** The learned men. — 23. **stars wear locks.** That is, have tails like comets. — 39. **You thing!** You wretched thing! This is spoken to the comet.

427: 83. **New marrow! . . . expressed.** The meaning seems to be: "Here is a new scent (perhaps Tourneur wrote 'matter'); I cannot be forced into confession."

429: 126. **This murder . . . tongueless brass.** Told on monuments that commonly speak not the truth. — 135. **we could have nobles clipped,** etc. Perhaps we could get noblemen into trouble and be rewarded for it.

GLOSSARY

Terms readily found in an unabridged dictionary, an encyclopædia, or a gazetteer are for the most part not included in this list.

A

A, on.
Accepted at, taken exception to.
Accrue, to draw upon yourself.
Acquaintance, knowledge.
Adamant, loadstone.
Affection, taste, fancy.
Aim, guess.
An, if.
Anatomies, skeletons.
Angel, a gold coin worth ten shillings.
Apprehend, to consider.
Apprehensive, quick of understanding.
Apricock, variant of *apricot*.
Arras-powder, probably orris-root powder.
Arrest, to seize.
Atomies, atoms.
Attend, to give attention.
Audit, final account.
Auditory, audience.

B

Bait, to harass.
Ballassed, ballasted.
Ballated, made the subject of ballads.
Banditto, bandit.
Banquerouts, bankrupts.
Barriers, a tilting-match, tournament.
Base-coined, misbegotten.
Basilisk, see *Cockatrice*.
Bate, to decline, fall away.
Bedstaff, a staff used to spread out bedclothes.
Bent, determined.
Blackguard, the scullion who rode with the kitchen utensils.
Blanks, blank-charter, something to which anything may be *affixed, promise*.
Bloodshed, bloodshot.
Blouze, a beggar's wench.
Bowelled, disembowelled.
Braches, bitch hounds.
Brave, finely and splendidly dressed.
Bravely, finely.
Braver, more splendidly.
Brawns, muscles, usually of the arms.
Briarius, a hundred-handed giant.
Bring, to accompany.
Bring up, to bring in.
Brize, the gadfly.
Broad, unrestrained.
Broke up, broke.
Bumbasted, stuffed out.
Burganet, a closs-fitting helmet.
Bushing, flaring out in the form of a bush.

C

Careening, lying over on one side, as a ship.
Caroche, great coach.
Carve, to make a gesture of compliment or understanding with hand or finger, usually at table while raising the glass to the mouth.
Caters, caterers.
Cause, affair, case in law.
Censure, to think.
Censure, estimate, opinion.
Censured, judged, criticized.
Censurer, judge.
Check, to strike at, as a hawk.
Chirurgeon, surgeon.
Civility, the quality most characteristic of a civilized community.
Cling, to embrace.
Clip, embrace.
Clock, hour.

Close, secret, affording good opportunity for hiding.
Closed, disclosed.
Close-pent, close shut.
Cockatrice, a basilisk, a fabulous reptile believed to kill with a look.
Cod-piece, the triangular patch in the front of the Elizabethan dress for men, to which the hose were fastened.
Collet, the setting which surrounds the stone of a ring.
Colour, excuse, trick.
Commedled, commingled.
Competent, to be measured.
Complement, external appearance.
Compound, come to some agreement.
Comrague, comrade.
Conceit, idea, judgement, opinion; imagination, a mental picture.
Concionate, to harangue the mob.
Confine, to drive out.
Consort, company.
Conster, to construe.
Convertite, convert.
Conveyed, managed, often implying secrecy.
Convince, to convict.
Convince, to overcome, be superior to.
Corrasive, caustic.
Corrasived, corroded.
Coulter, ploughshare.
Countermand, to control.
Couple, to embrace.
Court it, to frequent the court.
Cozen, to cheat.
Crudded, curded.
Crusado, a Portuguese coin.
Cullis, a rich soup.
Curious, accurate.
Curst, cross.
Cypress, crêpe.

D

Dainty, *daintily*.
Danske, Dansig, perhaps Danish.
Defend, to forbid.
Digested, arranged, plotted.
Discourse, relate, tell.
Discover, to make known.
Disembogue, to discharge.
Dispose, to dispose of.
Dissemblence, dissimulation.
Diversivolent, desiring strife.
Don, to do.
Dotterel, a bird notorious for its foolishness.
Double, practise deception.
Drab, mistress, strumpet.

E

Easy, easily bribed.
Engines, mechanical devices.
Enthronized, enthroned.
Ephemerides, a table of the motion of the planets.
Equal, just.
Estate, worldly condition.
Exorbitant, unusual because of greatness.
Expect, suspect, anticipate.
Expresseth, brings out.

F

Fact, deed; criminal act.
Fall, to change.
Fall, accident, vicissitude.
Familiar, a familiar spirit.
Farthingale, hoop petticoat.
Faulting, crime.
Fearful, timid, full of fear.
Felly, outer rim of a wheel.
File, defile.
Fond, foolish.
Fondly, foolishly.
Forbear, to go away, move away.
Former, formerly.
Found, found out.
Fox, a sword.
Framed, formed.
From, far from.
Furnished, furnished with food, set.

G

Galliard, a lively dance.
Gallouses, gallows-birds, criminals.
Gargarism, gargle.
Gather, to infer.

Gealed, clotted, made solid by cold.
General-honest, of good reputation.
Gennet, a small Spanish horse.
Gentles, maggots.
Give aim, to incite, encourage.
Glassen, made of glass.
Go, to walk.
Golls, hands.
Gossip, a sponsor in baptism.
Grazed, lost in the grass.
Groom, servant.
Gudgeons, small fish which are very easily caught.
Gullery, deception.

H

Habit, dress, disguise; method of conducting one's self.
Happily, passibly, by chance.
Harness, armour, the equipment of a soldier.
Hasped, folded in an embrace as if bound with a hasp.
Hazard, the side of the tennis court into which the ball is served.
Heaves, sighs.
Hodmondod, a snail.
Honesty, chastity.
Hugger-mugger, secretly, clandestinely.
Hurl, to bluster.
Husband, steward, manager.

I

Impart, to take a part in.
Impostume, abscess.
Indifferent, ordinarily.
Infallid, infallible.
Infect, infected, wicked.
Infortunate, unfortunate.
Ingenious, ingenuous.
Ingeniously, heartily, ingenuously.
Insculption, inscription.
Intelligencer, *informer*.
Iper, *the* ***iperquiba*** or *sucking-fish*.

J

Joy, to rejoice over.
Julio, a coin of about sixpence value.

K

Kennel, gutter.
Kissing-comfits, sugar-plums perfumed to make the breath sweet.
Knit, to unite.

L

Lay, wager.
Leaguer, camp.
Leaguerer, member of a camp, soldier.
Leam, leash.
Leiger, permanent.
Levet, young hare.
Levies, troops.
Light, wanton, frivolous.
Limed, painted.
Lists, " remanents."
Literated, learned.
Little-timbered, small in body.
Luxur, lascivious person.
Luxurious, lascivious.

M

Manage, management, horsemanship.
Mandragora, mandrake, a soporific.
Mass, by the mass.
Maugre, defy.
Maze, perplexity, confusion.
Measle, sow.
Meet, to come to, fall to.
Mete, measured.
Misprision, misapprehension.
Misprized, undervalued.
Moderator, judge.
Moile, mule.
Morphewed, leprous.
Mortification, death.
Mother, hysteria.
Mulct, debt.

Mummy, a pitch-like substance, supposedly extracted from mummies, used as a medicine.

N

Nake, to make naked, unsheath.
Natural, foolish.
Naught, bad in a moral sense.
Nerve, sinew.
Next, next heir.
Next to, except, unless.
Novel, novelty, new thing.

O

Obdure, obdurate.
Object, sight.
Oblique, perverse.
One and one, one another.
Opposite, antagonist.
Order, to draw up in order.
Owed, owned.

P

Palped, dark.
Paraquito, parrot.
Parlous, perilous.
Part, to depart.
Pash, strike hard, knock.
Passenger, wayfarer, traveller.
Peevish, foolish.
Period, sentence.
Perspective, a telescope.
Pewter, pewterer.
Physic, cure, work as a remedy.
Pioner, digger, ditcher.
Placket, slit in a petticoat.
Plot, plan.
Policy, the art of managing affairs to one's own advantage; art of managing public affairs.
Politic, ingeniously contrived.
Populous, popular.
Port, general appearance, often applied to one who was stately in bearing.
Possessed, informed.
Possessing, installation.
Poulter, *poulterer*.
Presence, *a royal* court.
Presentment, presentation.
President, judge.
Press, impress.
Private, privacy.
Proffer, to make a feint.
Progress, a state journey.
Provant, provided as a part of the equipment of a soldier; provision.
Puisne, novice.
Pullen, poultry.
Purchase, gain, booty.
Purse-net, a net, the mouth of which closed like a purse.
Put on, to pretend to be.

Q

Quaint, fine.
Quaintlier, with greater skill or expedition.
Quaintly, finely, precisely; excellently.
Quake, to shake, make tremble.
Quality, profession, character.
Quarrel, cause.
Quat, the squatting posture of a hare.
Questionless, beyond doubt.
Quicken, to enliven one.
Quietus, the statement signed at the settlement of an account.
Quit, excuse.
Quit, to requite.
Quittance, revenge.
Quoit, throw.
Quoted, written down.

R

Rase, to strike on the surface.
Ravel, to unravel.
Reach, to understand.
Receiver, procurer.
Refine, to get possession of.
Regardant, looking backward.
Regreets, re-greetings, new greetings.
Reportage, report.
Resolve, dissolve, separate into original elements; inform.
Resolved, determined, convinced.